THE
Heavenly Trade,
OR THE
BEST MERCHANDIZING:
The only way to live well in
IMPOVERISHING TIMES.

A Discourse occasioned from the decay of Earthly Trades, and visible wastes of Practical Piety in the day we live in, offering Arguments and Counsels to all, towards a speedy revival of dying Godliness, and timely prevention of the dangerous issues thereof impending on us. Necessary for all Families.

The Second Edition Corrected.

By *Bartholomew Ashwood*, Minister of the Gospel.
Author of *The Best Treasure*.

Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, Joh. vi. 27.

Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his Righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you, Matth. vi. 33.

Ne nimium operæ consumas in rebus levissimis, fugax ætas, & vitrea res valetudo, non quibuslibet est impendenda: quædam despicienda sunt, & animus ad magna est erigendus. Eras.

Αὐτοῦ δὲ μετ' εὐσεβείας καὶ δικαιοσύνης ζῶνται ἔντε τοῖς πᾶσι χρόνοις ἀσφαλῶς διάγονται καὶ ἀεὶ τοῦ σύμπαντος αἰῶνος ἡδίους τὰς ἐλπὶ δας ἔχονται. Isocrat.

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TO

My honoured Friend

Mr. *Jeremy Holwey*,

Merchant in *BRISTOL*.

SIR,

BOth Equity and Interest do give you a peculiar claim to this offspring of my weak Labours, it being born in your House, and drawing its first breath in your famous City. 'Twas with you I had the occasion, and from your self the practical encouragement to treat on this Subject; while under your Roof I enjoyed for divers weeks the advantage of your converse, and beheld in your expressions and conversation a fair display of this Heavenly Trade. This cherished my hopes that a discourse of this nature might find or help to make more such Traders in your Augusti

and Merchandizing City: A place (among its many Ornaments) made happy with Gospel enjoyments; and the lovers of Truth and Peace. 'Tis Religion is the honour and prosperity of a People, It lays the foundation with Agates, and makes their borders of pleasant stones, *Isa.* 54. *'Tis like the Crown of* Solomon, with which his Mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart, *Cant.* 3. 11. *This gives them* Peace within their walls, and Prosperity within their Palaces, *Psal.* 122. 7. *It brings down a blessing on their Basket and Stores*, fills their Chambers with all precious & pleasant riches *Prov.* 24. 4. *And decay in this Heavenly Trade, is doubtless one reason of those wasts in Mens earthly Trades. There is no such way for Men to thrive in their own interests, as to be faithful to God's interest; As 'twas said of* Cæsar, *that* by setting up *Pompey*'s Image, he established his own, *whereas a decay of Godliness brings a Moth on Mens earthly Trades also:* Hos. 5. 11, 12. Ephraim is oppressed and broken in judgment, because he willingly walked after the Commandment, therefore will I be unto

Ephraim

Ephraim a Moth, and to the House of *Judah* as rottenness. Gregory *gives this reason why* Dives *was tormented in his Tongue, because he talk'd much of Religion but practised little,* Verba legis in ore tenuit quæ opere servare Contempsit. *We live in an age of much talking of God, but of little walking with God; Mens Tongues are tipt with Heaven, but their Hearts and Feet sunk into the World, and are full of Pride, Vanity, and Deceit. What was said of* Diogenes Synopensis, *That* in Opinion he was a Stoick, but in Conversation an Epicure, *may be sadly reflected on many Professors in this Age, who espouse strict Principles, but lead loose Lives, and only Treat for Heaven, but trade for Earth, But*

Sir, You have not so learned Christ, or received this Spirit which is of the World; but that which is of God, 1 *Cor.* 2. 12. *Your devotedness to the Lord making your Earthly Interests subservient to things above, with your Zeal, Courage, and Constancy in the way of God, and natural care for the things of his Glory, do bespeak you to be a Trader of another Countrey, whose work and wages are above; And certainly whatever Men*

think a walking with God in his appointments, and a conſcientious care in every thing to pleaſe him, will one day appear to be the greateſt intereſt even in their eyes who now deſpiſe it; neither is there at preſent any thing in the ways of God, which Souls have cauſe to be aſhamed of, however cloathed with Calumny and Scorn by Men; nor can they who walk in them in Truth, be deprived of any real intereſt by the utmoſt ſeverity of thoſe that would run them down; And were there no other Argument to perſwade Men to the choice and purſuit of Godlineſs, this were ſufficient, even that relief gracious Souls find from a reflexion on their uprightneſs, to bear them up under their greateſt ſufferings; yea, that ſerenity, peace, and ſweet acquieſcence of Spirit, which ſincerity affords them under the moſt dreadful iſſues which divine pleaſure may allot them here. It muſt needs ſet Religion above all other Intereſts (its Enemies themſelves being Judges, if they would be rational) that the worſt things of Holineſs, even then when Believers are under the ſaddeſt Circumſtances, are choſen and preferred by them above the beſt

best things of the world, yea, they are thought a good bargain when purchased with their greatest Sufferings. Surely humour will not engage such who know the usefulness of earthly Comforts, and have least reason to be prodigal of them, to expose themselves, and their dearest concerns in the World unto ruine, but for what they are perswaded, is far better, Heb. 10. 34. Nor can it be thought obstinacy or hypocrisie in those who know their own Hearts, and the terrors of the Lord, to persist in those ways that would cost them their earthly All, and lay them open to divine wrath too, should they be false and disobedient. Certainly, did not prejudice and passion blind Mens Eyes, the calm exercise of their own light would restrain them from such an uncharitable censure of those that desire to fear God, though they walk in some ways different from their understanding, while they labour to approve their integrity to God and Men, and are found faithful to that measure of light they have received. But possibly this Piece may not fall into such hands, or be permitted long under their eye: My hopes, at least my desires are that it may prosper with those who pro-

fess better things. And if it shall please the Lord (who sometimes uses clay and spittle, and Goats hair, and counts the things that are not as if they were) to make this of any service to your Self and Family, and unto those who profess his Name in your City, for whom I have so high respect in the Lord, it will abundantly compensate the Labour, and answer the design of him who is and desires to approve himself

SIR,

Your Servant in

Christ Jesus

Barthol. Ashwood.

TO

TO THE READERS,

ESPECIALLY

Thoſe who are the more peculiar Objects of my *Care, Love* and *Labours.*

NOtwithſtanding the high Pretenſions to *Light* and *Wiſdom* in the Times we live in beyond ſome former Ages, there is no ſmall meaſure of *Soul darkneſs* fallen upon us in this Evening part of our *Goſpel day*; Iſa. 42. 19, 20. *Who is blind but my Servant? or deaf as my Meſſenger that I ſent? who is blind as he that is perfect, and blind as the Lords Servant? ſeeing many things but thou obſerveſt not: opening*

ing the ear, but he heareth not. Were not a Veil on Mens minds, could it possibly be that *CHRIST* should be so little precious in this *Day of revelation* and *Land of visions* in which we live? Was there ever a Nation in the World to whom *Christ* hath been so unveiled & manifestly held forth, *Crucified* before their eyes? and yet not to know the *Day of their visitation, and the things of their peace*, be-speaks shameful Ignorance. Is not this a manifest Evidence of Mens *Darkness* and *folly*, to be fondly taken with Airy Notions and vain Speculations, and all the while neglect that *Wisdom which maketh wise to salvation*, to leave the *Fire of the Sanctuary*, and sit down by *sparks of their own kindling*: that having a Kingdom before them which *cannot be shaken*, and an *Inheritance that fadeth not away reserved in the Heavens*; they should turn again to the *beggarly Elements of this World*, loathing their *Manna* and *Angels food*, and longing again for the *Onyons and Garlick* they had vomited up; to leave *tried Gold* for that which *perisheth*; to let Heaven drop out of their hands, and hugg the World in their hearts; to neglect

lect that *Merchandize* which brings in *unsearchable riches*, and drive a Trade for such Goods whose *fashion passeth away*: Do plainly argue Ignorance and folly are not the *silver streams* of *Jordan*, better than *the muddy waters* of *Assyria*, and *our Rock* above *the worldlings Sandy bottoms* (they themselves being Judges,) and yet to lose those *pleasant streams* for that *filthy puddle*, is folly indeed. Will Eagles stoop to Flies? Can Souls who have ascended into *the light of the Lord*, and seen the *things* that *differ*, and had *acquaintance* with *things above* upon choice, come down again and prey upon the Carrion Comforts and Interests of a dying World? O no. Can a Maid forget her Ornaments, or a Bride her Attire? Oh *foolish people and unwise* to be unmindful of *the Rock that begat them*, to leave *the Snow of Lebanon*, to let down such a gainful Trade as Holiness is, that they may pursue a Soul-cheating, starving, damning World: demonstrates *folly* and *madness* in such as have the knowledge or hopes of *better things*: are ye so foolish having *begun in the spirit*; are ye now *made perfect by the flesh*? Gal. 3. 3. To obviate or retrieve this *folly* is the design

design of this ensuing Discourse, which comes not in the gawdy Dress of curious Art, or in the *Excellency of Mans wisdom*, but *in the plainness and demonstration of the truth as it is in Jesus*. I am not ignorant that Books have their Fashions as well as Men, and Discourses that come not forth in the Modish Garb laced with Elegancy, and stuffed with Lofty strains, scarce meet with a Look except of Scorn and Contempt from the Wits of this Day: But I love not to follow them who *darken counsel* by words, and by their sublime Speculations and abstruse Notions, lead Men into Clouds of their own creating, and while they shew themselves lose their Readers. "*There are many tricks and devices* (saith Mr. *Dod*) "*that some Men use in Preaching* (which "we may apply also to Writing) *but it* "*seldom does good; the pure Gospel and* "*that Preaching which the World counts* "*foolishness, is that which works most* "*kindly*. Christ's own Weapons are the fittest for his own service, & when there is least of man in Gods work, then usually does there most of God appear. The business of this Book is not to feed thy *Curiosity*, but to find out thy *Conscience*, &

the

the likeliest way to that is through the *plains* of *Intelligible truth.* I cannot expect that Discourse should lead others towards Heaven, that has not its self drained and refined from Earth: Expect not in this any thing that may please thy carnal mind, but what may profit thy teachable and obedient Soul; and before thou ascendest the Throne to judge it, take the Balance of the Sanctuary and weigh it, Be advised to go beyond such Readers who only view the Title, read the Epistle, glance a little on the Book, and if they find not something singular, & pleasing their curious Fancy, lay it aside; This shews a full Stomach but an empty Soul, and is a Practice that overturns the Writers pains & the Readers profit: be perswaded to read it throughly and impartially, and weigh it seriously, & thou mayest find something that concerns either thy Understanding, Affection, Conscience, or Conversation.

I have chosen to prosecute the Metaphor of (*Trading*) throughout this Discourse, having a principal respect to that sort of persons in the design of this Book, and the better to insinuate into the mind of ordinary Christians the know-

ledge

ledge of *Heavenly things*, of Mens *duties, neglects and backſlidings*. If thou art one who never madeſt a profeſſion of God farther than blindneſs, formality, or ſuperſtition might lead thee; and a ſtranger to this great, pleaſant, and gainful Trade of Godlineſs, here thou mayeſt find Arguments to perſwade thee to this rational and neceſſary undertaking in order to Life and Salvation, Grace & Glory, with Counſel and Inſtructions how thou mayeſt attain to this high and heavenly *Calling*.

If thou be one who driveſt furiouſly after the World, purſuing thy earthly Intereſt with greedineſs, neglecting the things that concern thy *peace*, and ſubjecting the Concerns of Heaven and thy immortal Soul to the poor and periſhing Trifles of this World; here thou wilt find reaſons to convince thee of that *folly*, and helps to looſen thy heart from that en-ſnaring Soul-ruining bondage.

If thou meeteſt with Rebukes upon thy earthly Intereſts, and croſſes on thy Affairs and undertakings in the world, this Book will help thee to find out the Cauſe of thy Diſappointments, & thoſe conſuming

consuming Moths on thy Estate, and Instruct thee to get *Honey* out of these *Rods*, *good* from these *evils*, and how to Comport with *Divine ends*, and thy own *Advantages* by such *Dispensations*.

Hast thou made a profession of Godliness, and formerly driven this *Heavenly Trade* to *Advantage*, but art now fallen back and decay'd in thy *Spiritual substance*, and become poor in thy *Inward man* and toward God; here mayest thou find the *Discoveries* and *Evidences* of a *back-sliding Soul*, with the *Causes* of it: thou wilt also meet with *Awakening Considerations* to Affect and Afflict thy heart with the sense of thy evil *Case*: Here also mayest thou know whether thy *Decays* are *cureable*; and what *course* thou mayest take to get out of thy *languishing estate*.

Art thou one that doest profess this *Heavenly Trade*? this Piece will tell thee what thy *work* is, and wherin this *Imployment* lies; what are the *Important duties* of *Piety* to be driven on every Day, with *Directions* and *Rules* about it.

If thou art one who keepest up this *Trade for Heaven* and thrivest therein, here hast thou *marks* of a *Prosperous Trade* in *Godliness*, and several Doubts cleared

cleared up about thy *Soul-thrivings*, with those *Important Duties* opened which this *Peculiar Mercy* calls for: Gather out of this Garden what *Physick* or *Food* thou needest, and Apply and Improve it, praying for the Assistance of that Spirit that hath been frequently & solemnly begged both for the forming & Blessing of this *Discourse* unto all that read it.

You who have been Hearers of this Subject, though in somewhat different Expressions suited to your Capacity & Advantage in the Delivery of it, have reason above others to Receive and Improve this *Message* Twice sent unto you.

But you Especially my dear Friends, the Care of whose Souls is *upon me*, for *whose sake* chiefly these Truths were at first delivered, and are now made Publick, have the most obliging reasons to get them Copied out upon your Hearts, and in your Lives. To you Firstly, more especially, yea, most Affectionately was & is this *Word of salvation* sent & presented again to your View, that you might have these things abiding with you, and that they might live in your *Eye* which have sounded in your *Ear*, and be *speaking* to you when I shall be *removed* out of *your sight*

ſight, and be beyond all Capacity to ſerve your *precious* and *immortal Souls*, that when I can plead no more for God or with you, I may in this be *ſpeaking* to you and others in the behalf of Chriſt, and *glorious*, though *deſpiſed Holineſs*. This has been the prevailing Argument with me to diſcover my weakneſs to the World, and expoſe my ſelf to the cenſure or ſcorn of ſome.

I have the greateſt reaſon to expect from you the *Entertainment* of theſe *Truths*, who have *choſen* and *received me in the Lord, to declare the Goſpel of his Son to you*: You alſo have known my *Labours, Infirmities*, and *Afflictions* with you and for your ſake; that for twenty years ſpace I have *ſerved you in the Goſpel*, in *reproach, wants, weakneſſes; dangers* and *ſufferings*, neither count I my life *dear* unto *my ſelf*, ſo that I may *finiſh my courſe with joy*, and the *Miniſtry* which I have *received of the Lord Jeſus, to teſtifie the Goſpel of the grace of God*: yea, being ſo *affectionately deſirous of you*, I have been willing to have *imparted to you* not the *Goſpel of God onely*, but alſo *my own Soul*. Becauſe you were *dear unto me*, you *know* and have *acknowledged* the ſuitableneſs of this *Subject* unto your own *Caſes*, & how *evidently* the *condition* of moſt of you is *opened here & ſuited*, by the *convictions, counſels*,

reprehensions, & *consolations* of this *discourse*; there are some among you that *I am jealous of with a Godly jealousie*, lest I should have *laboured in vain for you*, and *your minds be corrupted from the simplicity of the Gospel through the temptations of this present world*: I have often *cried aloud in your ears* against the *sin*, and have warned you of the *danger* of an *earthly spirit and conversation*, and do tell you now *even weeping*, that *such are Enemies to the Cross of Christ*, who mind *earthly things*, until you are *crucified to the world*, you have no *saving benefit of the cross of Christ*, or can ever *behold the face of God in Heaven*, until you are *redeemed from the earth*; all your *Profession*, *Parts*, *Duties* and *Enjoyments* will be but so many *Witnesses* against you, if after all you are lovers of this present World: Coveting to be rich will also make your *Souls* poor, and deprive you of the *refreshments* of his *presence* and *consolations* of his *blessed spirit*, and will be a *manifest evidence* that you have little of those pleasures that are from above. 'Twas said of pious Mr. *Bain*, That *he sought not great matters in the World, being taken up with comforts and griefs to which the World was a stranger*. The more a *Soul* converses in *Heaven* and lives upon *the first fruits* of the *other world*, the less will

will he be taken *with things below*: when *Abraham* came to *live by faith*, and in a view of *that City* whoſe *Maker and Builder is God*, the *Plains* of *Sodom*, and *Spoils* of *Canaan* were to him but mean things; *I never cared much for the world* (ſaith one) *ſince I came to know better things*. You have *taſted* that *the Lord is gracious*, you have *fed* on the *fat things of his houſe*, and have found *a day in his Courts better than a thouſand* elſewhere, and muſt be *ſelf-condemned* if you prefer not God above *Ten thouſand Worlds*, and count the *enjoyment* of himſelf *riches* enough; yea, if you *eſteem not the reproach of Chriſt greater riches than the treaſures of Egypt*. 'Twas a brave ſpeech of that noble *Galeatius* when he had left his Honour, Intereſt and Relations for Chriſt and the Goſpel ſake: *I have, ſaith he, riches, honour, and joy enough while in this Cottage I may live in the Church of God, enjoy his Word and People, and have time to converſe with God by holy meditation, and with my Friends about Gods great goodneſs to me in my Converſion. Curſed for ever be that Religion which weds men to the World, and divorces them from God.*

There are others of you (I fear) fallen back in your *ſpiritual ſtate*; former days were better than now, and the ſhadow gone back *ſome degrees* upon the *Dial* of *your hearts*, who it may be have left *your firſt love*, have *loſt your ſpiritual taſte*, more *dead* to *the things of God*, *Cold* and *formal in Duty*; poſſibly you have hid your face from God, and he hath *compaſſed himſelf with a Cloud* before you. You have neglected your *walks with God*, and he hath with-held converſe with you: For the *recovery* of ſuch from whence *they have fallen* to their *firſt love* and *labours*, is part of this *Diſcourſe* framed; hear what the Spirit ſaith therein, *Attend* and *Obey* thoſe *Counſels*, return to your *firſt love*, and *do your firſt works*, leaſt the Lord take the *Candleſtick out of his place*, and leave you in that *wilderneſs into which you wander*.

Some of you who are *fearers of God* yet *walk in darkneſs*, and *ſee no light*, have your *continual Exerciſes* and *frequent Complaints*, that he who ſhould have *comforted your ſouls*, is *removed far from you*: My advice to you is, to *walk in the light* when you *ſit in darkneſs*, and wait for the *light*, when the *even ſhadows* are

are upon you. 'Tis but a little while and *he that ſhall come will come, and will not tarry*; the *Son of righteouſneſs* is upon his journey towards you, and 'twill not be long ere it be *riſen* upon you.

Are there any of you who have *better days*, does your *Bow abide in ſtrength*, are your *Affections* warm to towards your *Beloved*, and your hearts ſometimes burn within you while he is *talking* to you in his *Word*? Do you long for *his Appearance*, and delight in his *Preſence*, and *preſs* hard after him in his *Appointments*? Do you love the *Word of his mouth* more than your *neceſſary food*? Can you be content to let your own things ſit, that you may *ſeek the things that are Chriſt's*: and *ſit at his feet*, when others are in the *market-place*, and abroad in the croud of their *earthly affairs*; Are you alone with *Chriſt* in a corner? If ſo, your *Mercy* is *ſingular*, and your *Obligations ſtrong* to be *entirely the Lords*; to be no more *your own*, but *wholly devoted to his fear*, to live a *life of praiſe* and *well-pleaſingneſs unto God*, to think well of *Chriſt*, and bear his pleaſure; to be *patient in tribulation*, continuing *inſtant in prayer*, to long for the *Well-head* of your

mercies, and to be beginning a *life of glory* while you are here in a *life of grace*. I ſhall cloſe up *this Diſcourſe* with a few words of general Advice to you all.

Firſt, lay the *foundation* ſure on which you build all your *Temporary labours* and your *Eternal hopes*: You cannot be too certain, in that on which depends *your all*. Conſider how often *Satan* hath *battered down*; yea, your own hearts have diſputed away *thoſe Evidences*, on which you could ſometimes have *adventured your Souls*, and yet the *ſtrongeſt Aſſaults* are to come, and the *greateſt Forces of Hell* reſerved for the *laſt Battel*. Bottom not your hopes on any thing ſhort of a *Crucified Chriſt*, not on your *Frames*, but on his *Favour*; not upon your *Duties*, but his *Righteouſneſs*; nor upon any kindneſſes received from him ſhort of a *ſaving union* with him; reſt not till your *Convictions* be *clear*, *deep* and *diſtreſſing*, ſuch as *diſcover* ſin to be the *greateſt* evil in its *nature* and *fruits*, and its *reſidence* and *indwelling* in you, a *burden* intolerable; ſuch *Convictions* as will not admit of *after-favour* or *reconciliation* to the leaſt *known* or moſt *beloved* ſin; that can make your heart to bleed afreſh upon every

ry new *touch* of it, and never at reſt till the whole kind of it be deſtroyed out of your Souls: Labour to ſee ſuch a *Beauty* in *Chriſt*, as may render all Creat'd Glory as *droſs* and *dung* in your Eye; ſtop not till you come to the *Excellency* of the *knowledge* of *Jeſus Chriſt* as your *Lord*; till you can *diſcern* ſuch a *worth* in the *Perſon* as well as *Purchaſe* of *Chriſt*, as will make you content to throw all *over board*, to *take in him*, and be *ſick of love* till you *enjoy him*: be ſure your *cloſe* with *Chriſt* be right with his whole *Perſon*, *Will* and *Deſigns*, to be *one* with him upon all his *own terms*. And that this *union* be not in Judgment and Conſent only, but in *Heart* and *Will* from your *whole Souls*, finding an *inward likeneſs* and *love* to him in your *renewed nature*.

2dly, Go on towards *perfection*, preſs after *nearer* and more *compleat* Conformity to the *Nature* and *Will* of *Chriſt* every day: Think how ſhort your *higheſt meaſures* do come of *perfect holineſs in the ſight of God*; ſet the *Pattern* before you every day, that you may be the more *aſham'd* at your *preſent attainments* in *Grace*, and more provoked to *higher Aims* and *Atchievements*; compare your ſelves

with them that are above you, with the *Rule of Righteouſneſs*, and with all your *Obligations*, *Time*, *Means* and *Mercies*, to keep you *humble* in *your own eyes*; look upon *your Wants* as well as *Enjoyments*, that you may be as *poor in ſpirit* as in *condition*; that which is *wanting in you* cannot be *numbred*: *Who am I and what is my people that we ſhould be able to offer ſo willingly after this ſort?* 1 *Chron.* 19. 14. keep low thoughts in *your ſelves* under the *greateſt ſervices you do for God*, and the *higheſt honour you receive from God*. *Alas* (ſaid the Lord *Dupleſſis* to one that commended him for the improvement of his Talent) *What is there of mine in that Work? ſay not that it was I, but God in me. I know more* (ſaith another) *by my ſelf to abaſe me, than any Man could know to extol me. So much humility a Man hath, ſo much grace he hath, and worth, and no more*: Dr. Har.

3ly, Keep up a *life of Faith* upon *Chriſt* in the *promiſes*: As the *firſt quickening* of a Chriſtian *is by faith*, ſo his *whole life* is maintained *by believing*; no longer than *you believe* can *you live*: Gal. 2. 20. *Your life is hid with Chriſt in God.* Draw freſh *Influence* thence by *faith* upon *your Hopes*,

Hopes, *Comforts* and *Graces* under every *want*, *fears* and *deaths* within you; make not *your graces* or *duties* the grounds of *believing*, but *encouragements* to *Faith*; ſtudy more the *nature*, *freeneſs*, *fulneſs*, and *unchangeableneſs* of *redemption grace*, and get acquaintance with the *promiſe* and *perſwaſions* of the truth of them in Chriſt: *To live only by faith* (ſaith Dr. Harris) *and a bare Promiſe without a pawn, and to give all to free grace and to Chriſt alone, are mighty works*; and ſome of thoſe things he found moſt difficult.

4ly, Walk in *Love* as *Chriſt hath loved you*: This is the *life of Heaven*, and *beginning* of that *Excellent glory* which ſhall never be *removed*; there is nothing does make thee more like to God, more *near* and *dear* to him, and more fit for his uſe than this *Grace of Love*: Let your Affections be extended as large as the *objects* of them: unto *God*, his *Word*, *Ways* and *People*; love *God* to *obey him*; his *Ways* to *walk in them*, his *People* to *delight in them*, to *ſympathize* with them, to *mourn* over them in their *ſufferings*, to *help* them in their *neceſſities*, to *rejoyce* with them in their *conſolations*, counting their *mercies* your own, which is no eaſie

part

part of your duty. *It is far harder* (ſaith one) *to adopt anothers Comforts than his Sorrows, and to hold ones ſelf exalted in anothers exaltation.*

5ly, In the enjoyment of the World get above it, and while you *live in it*, be daily *dying to it*; ſo much as you get above the World, ſo *near* are *you to God* and *Glory*, and no *nearer*. Covet not anothers Goods, the World is none of your *Portion*, if God be *your part*. Oh how much beneath the *Extraction*, *Dignity* and *Duty* of Saints is the love to, and life upon this low and dirty World: leave not *Childrens bread* to feed on ſuch *Carrion doggs-meat*, and *filthy excrements*, with which *Satan* feeds his Labourers. But having ſpoke largely of this matter in the *Book*, I adviſe *your Eye* and *Heart* thither for *Conviction* and *Counſel* herein.

6ly, Make much of the *Time* and *Means* of *Grace* while you have them; your Glaſs runs, your Sun haſtens, and the Wind blows when and where it liſteth. O make uſe of *Time* while you have it: God who made nothing in *vain*, hath *work* for every hour of *your ſhort Day*; work as *hard* as you can, you will find *ſomething* to do when you come *to die*.

Loſs

Loſs of time (ſaith Dr. *Harris* on his Death-bed) *ſits very near upon me; work, work apace, aſſure your ſelves nothing will more trouble you when you come to die, than that you have done no more for that God which hath done ſo much for you.* Wait upon, and walk in the light while you have it; if *Grace* thinks it not much to ſpread a Table for you, don't you think it much to ſpare time to ſit down at it: You that find ſo many things to do when God calls for your Company, will ſhortly find that God hath other things to do than to mind you when you need his *Cordials*; how glad would you be of enjoying *time* to hear the voice of *peace* when you are entring upon *Eternity*, who are not at leiſure now to hear *Divine precepts* while in the *poſſeſſion of time*; neglect not *hearing, praying ſeaſons*, which are your *Seed-time* for glory. *O that every day* (ſaith one) *were a Sabbath or a Faſt-day, for then I ſhould be well.* Buy not your eaſe or earthly intereſt at ſo dear a rate as *the loſs of ſalvation, time* and *helps*: Evidence *your love to God* by *your valuation* of his *Preſence* in his *Ordinances*; How can you long for *the enjoyment of God in Heaven*, who care not *for his company*

company on Earth, or *his glorious appearances in his Sanctuary*. Stick at nothing that may yield him delight, or give him glory, how expenſive ſoever it be on *your deareſt Comforts and Intereſts*: When one told *Du Moulin* in his ſickneſs that he wronged himſelf by ſpeaking ſo much; *'Tis true*, ſaid he, *but I will aye glorifying of God.* A Soul that ſupreamly *loves God*, will count nothing too much *to do, part with*, or *ſuffer* that may bring him *glory*.

7ly, Reſt not in *your enjoyments of means*, without *improvement of them*: What's *a full Table*, if *thy Soul abide empty*, and *frequent feeding*, if *thy inner man languiſh*: 'tis a time of *dying* and *ſecret waſte* in moſt Chriſtians; O covet earneſtly the *beſt gifts*, that you may *flouriſh* in the Courts of God, and grow as the *Cedars of Lebanon*; that you may be *throughly furniſhed to every good work*, and *your profiting* appear to all Men: Be deeply ſenſible of your *little Fruit* under *great dreſſing*, and be *humbled*; take heed of *ſpiritual pride*, and *puffings up* in your *apprehended Excellencies* or *Privileges*; 'tis the *humble ſoul* is the moſt *thriving ſoul*; keep your *Hearts pure*, and *Lives unſpotted*: As *ſound bodies*, ſo

ſincere

ſincere ſouls are moſt growing: pare off *luxuriant branches* as they ſprout out, and lay the *Ax* to the *root* of them every day; keep up *Faith* in the *Promiſes* of *Soul-proſperity* to them *that ſerve him* in *ſincerity*, *Pſal.* 92. 12, 13. and *ſtay* on Chriſt *by Faith* for help: when you ſee nothing but *Diſcouragements* in *your ſelves*, and when you are afraid to apply the *Promiſes*, even then bleſs God for them. *Theſe Promiſes*, ſaid a doubting Soul, *are none of mine, yet I am glad that God hath made them, and for their ſakes that ſhall partake of them*: Mr. *White*.

8thly, Neglect not *ſecret tranſactions* between *God* and *your Souls*, to which I fear ſome of you may be too great ſtrangers: no wonder that Intimacy between *God* and *Souls* does fall, when they are ſeldom together in *retirements*. Oh take heed of paſſing by thy Cloſet or ſecret corners one day, *Matth.* 6. 6. or poſting out of them before *God* and *your Souls* have ſome *Converſe together*; and be not only conſtant in it, but careful to pleaſe God in the *ſpiritual performance* of it: Let not Cuſtom or Formality deprive thee of the *ſweetneſs* of that *bread eaten in ſecret*. You are in this *Book* more fully called

called upon to *theſe Duties* of *ſecret Prayer*, *Meditation*, *heart-ſearching*, and *watching-work*, to which I refer you.

9thly; Make *conſcience* of every *Duty* you owe towards others, in *your Relations*, *Places* and *Callings*: keep up *Family-duty*, or write *Heathen* upon thy doors, that the World may know thee: If you neglect *Gods ſervice*, he will not be *your Sanctuary*; Prayerleſs houſes have *broken walls* and *doors*, and no defence againſt the leaſt evil: If you will not give God *your breathings*, how can you think he will give *you his bleſſings*: 'Tis ſaid that any, eſpecially ſuch whom God hath taken *into his houſe*, ſhould ſhut him *out of their doors*; or give him ſuch *pitiful ſervice* as ſome do, ſcarce ever reading the *Scriptures* in their *Families* from one Lords-day to another; only ſend him a little *haſty fruit*, ſome *ſhort* and *ſhuffled prayers* once a day: no wonder that *ſalvation come not to their houſes*, or *converting grace into their Families*, but a *flying Roll is over their habitations*, and the *black marks* of *Ruine* on their Children and Servants: think it not ſtrange that God makes *thy pleaſant Roſes pricking Bryers and Thorns* to thee, who haſt made

made them *Spears* and *Swords* to him. Oh keep with God in every *duty of his ſervice*, your *Relation*, *Calling* and *Imployments*.

Laſtly, in every condition *walk with God*, and *wait for God*; if he lead you *in ways of mercy*, follow him *in ways of duty*. If you have *Comforts* take heed of *doting on*, or *abuſing of them*: when he ſends *you Afflictions*, receive them; be not *fainting* nor *froward* under them, but *ſanctifie God in them*, and by their *hand* return to him: do not over-love *your mercies*, or over-fear *your troubles*: prepare for *Changes*, but live upon *Immutability*, and be ſetled under all *your unſettlements*: count nothing *ſtrange* but *ſin*, and nothing *hard to bear*, but the *abſence or anger of a gracious God*: loſe not *your fears in time of peace*, neither caſt away *your confidence* in the *day of trouble*: let *your Lamps* be always *burning*, that you may ſee *the way of your duty* in the *Night of your danger*; and how to get in *Comfort* in your *Adverſity*; and let *your loins be girt*, that you may be ready both to do *your work*, and to *meet your wages*; and be alway *looking and waiting for the coming of your Lord*, who

who will welcom you in the Acceptance of *your Duties*, uncloath you of *your sins and sufferings*, and crown *your sincerity* and *faithfulness* with a *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you*; which is the *longed for Fruit* of all his *Labours* with *you*, and the *subject matter* of his *daily prayers* for *you*, who is in him *that was, and is, and is to come.*

Your Affectionate Labourer,

Fellow Servant,

and

Brother,

Barthol. Ashwood.

THE HEAVENLY TRADE,

Opened and Improved from

PROVERBS III. 14.

For the Merchandiſe of it is better than the Merchandiſe of Silver, and the Gain thereof than fine Gold.

THat Religion is under a very great declenſion in the day and place wherein we live, is too evident to ſerious Obſervers; but too little laid to heart; or the prodigious Effects, which uſually follow ſuch expiring Godlineſs, duely trembled at. The Character of the laſt and perilous times hath overtaken us; men having a Form of Godlineſs, but denying the Power of it, 2 *Tim* 3, 5. (*a*) A Lamp, a Name to live, Notions, Parts, external Priviledges and Duties, make up the Religion of the greateſt part of Profeſſing Chriſtians this day, while the Vitals of Chriſtianity viſibly languiſh: (*b*) Where is that ancient Faith, Love, Zeal, Faithfulneſs, Courage, Patience

(*a*) *Nos non eloquimur magna ſed vivimus.* Minut. Foel.,
(*b*) *Chriſtianos non dici, ſed eſſe oportet,* Ignat.

Self denial, Mortifiedneſs to the World, Juſtice, Charity, Heavenly mindedneſs, holy Converſes, with that univerſal Piety and Unity, which made the Saints ſo famous in former Generations, and had ſo great an influence on the enlargement of Chriſts Kingdom, notwithſtanding Pagan and Antichriſtian force againſt it? In the room of which, now pride, Contention, formality, ſelfiſhneſs, hypocriſie, with the general gangrene of an earthly ſpirit, eats out the life and power of true holineſs. The effecting ſenſe of this dangerous evil gives occaſion to this enſuing Diſcourſe, whoſe errand into the World, is not to plead for Notion or Faction, but to advocate for deſpiſed Godlineſs; to help to awaken this ſleepy Age, and contribute a weak hand with abler ſhoulders, to give a liſt (if poſſible) to fallen Piety.

Amongſt the many Advocates for Piety, *Solomon* the Pen-man of this Book hath done worthily, and laid out much ſtrength of reaſon to attach the minds of men, and regain them to the knowledge and fear of God. This Chapter is a Syſteme of thoſe Motives which he more largely proſecutes throughout this Book, to perſwade men unto a through purſuit of holineſs. Divers are the Conſiderations he propoſes to this end: taken

Firſt, From the happineſs of thoſe that obtain and improve this pearl of grace, verſ. 13. *Happy is the man that* (c) *findeth wiſdom, and the man that* (d) *getteth underſtanding:* (though with

(c) נמצא *Labore ſibi paravit; involvit præviam inquiſitionem.* (d) יפיק *Profert in lucem, effundit.*

greateſt

greatest labour and cost) and having gotten it, doth put it to its due use and improvement for the good of others: They, who ever they be, are blessed Men and Women, in regard of that profit, pleasure, peace, honour, safety and life, (with the durable and eternal possession thereof) ensured to those that thus make Religion their business, from *vers.* 13, to 27.

Secondly, From the evil estate and end of those that pursue the ways of sin, which is in its nature vile and abominable to God, and as to its products, its shameful, cursed and destructive in the end, *verse* 23, 32, 33, 34, 35.

The Pen-man knew that few would deal in those Commodities, and trade about Divine Things (all men seeking their own, and few the things of Christ) and therefore sets forth those Wares with greatest commendation to Buyers, that they might off the better. He begins with the gain that comes by godliness, a popular argument, and that which in other things puts men on great adventures, and restless labours towards their enjoyment. *The hope of advantage* (saith *Chrysostom* (a) *makes all difficult things easie.*) What will not the Merchant do or suffer to get a little profit? A fit Metaphor to set forth the diligence of a Christian in his race, and to insinuate the worth of those eternal things he is in chase of. *The Merchandise of which is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.*

(a) *Lucri spes omnia difficilia facit jucunda.* Chrys. de Sacerd. 3. lib.

In the words, for methods ſake, you may obſerve,

Firſt, The ſubject, *wiſdoms merchandiſe*, and the gain thereof.

Secondly, The Predicate, *Better than ſilver, than fine gold.*

Wiſdom] Divine Wiſdom, which in this book, (not to mention all its acceptations:)

Firſt, Is put ſometimes for the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the ὁ λόγος, the Word, and increated Wiſdom of God, or the Wiſdom who is God; who is made to us of God, Wiſdom, as well as Righteouſneſs: the Light of the World: the bright Morning-Star: the Sun of Righteouſneſs, from whom are derived all thoſe Beams which irradiate the dark minds of men: and that Wiſdom which makes wiſe to ſalvation: in whom are hid all the Treaſures of Wiſdom: This is that ſhining Diamond, that Pearl of price, which out-vies all the beauties of the world; the coſtly Gems, and whole Treaſures of Nature, in whom are unſearchable riches, the enjoyment and uſe of whom is ſoul enriching.

Secondly, For the Word of God, which is, *ſure, making wiſe the ſimple; pure, enlightning the eye; and more to be deſired than gold, yea than much fine gold:* Called *the light of the Lord*, Iſa. 2. 5. *Come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord.* The Diſcerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, *Heb.* 4. 12. which are able through the Spirit's illumination, to make one wiſe to ſalvation: And in this ſenſe the *Jews* uſually take Wiſdom for the Word and Law of God: *In keeping of which there is great reward*, Pſal. 19. 11.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, By it is held forth a true and saving knowledge of God, part of that Original beauty which Man lost by his first Fall, and is regained by a second Edition and Impress of the Spirit, when renewed in knowledge after the Image of him that created it: This knowledge is called ἐπίγνωσις, not an idle speculative, but a lively operative knowledge, which consists of an illumination of the mind, and an infusion of faith and spiritual knowledge. *Parisiensis* calls it, (a) *The gate of life through which God first enters into the mind of man.* In this wisdom and knowledge of God as the souls last end, with the way that leads thereto, and felicity that results from it, enlightned minds see greater lustre than in fine gold, and all the bravery of this lower world.

Now this wisdom is not onely speculative, taking in the notion of truth, and pleasing the mind with refreshing views of things excellent; but practical, which disposes the soul to a fruition of God, so revealed to the eye of wisdom, and to the obedience of all those counsels opened in order to it. Hence *Davenant* counts it an errour in the Schoolmen to restrain Wisdom and Understanding to a contemplative life, (b) when both have their equal reference to an active practical life and conversation: In regard of its Essence, it's an intellectual vertue; but in respect to the matter and use, it's practical and morall: and therefore he defines Wis-

(a) *Portam vitæ per quam Deus primo ingreditur ad mentem humanam.* Parisiensis, (b) *Cum utraque ex æquo ejusdem speciei activum.*

dom to be (c) *an infused knowledge of those things which lead to faith and a holy life, with a pious affection, inclining the soul to the application and practice of the things it knows.* This the Scriptures hold out to be that true Wisdom, which God requires of men: And to man he said, *Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil, that is understanding.* Job 28.28. *Job* having spoken of the wonderful Wisdom of God in the Works of Creation, beyond all the searches of humane understanding, he tells them what is that Wisdom which God requires of man, not to screw into those unfathom'd Deeps and Mysteries of Divine Works in the Creation; not to feed on abstruse Notions of things that concern them not: but this is true Wisdom, to fear God, to serve and obey him, and to depart from iniquity: So *Deut.* 4. 5,6. *Behold I have taught you Statutes and Judgments, keep therefore, and do them, for this is your Wisdom and understanding in the sight of the Nations, which shall hear of all these Statutes, and say, Surely this great Nation is a wise and understanding people. Wisdom from above* (says the Apostle) *is pure, peaceable, gentle, easie to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits,* James 3. 17. That is it makes men holy and fruitful in good works. So the *Psalmist* describes Wisdom, by holy walking, *I will behave my self wisely in a perfect way,* Psal. 101. 2. and *Eph.* 5.15. *Walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise.* Holy walking is both the fruit of Wis-

(c) *Est igitur sapientia infusa cognitio illorum quæ ad fidem & bonam vitam pertinent cum affectu pio inclinante ad applicationem & praxin eorundem.* Daven.

dome

dome, and the way to Wisdom, *Col.* 1. 9, 10. *You may be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all knowledge and understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord to all well-pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.* And so the *Wise man* understands it in this Book, *Prov.* 1. 7. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.* That (*a*) saith *Aquinas*) *from whence wisdom begins to be operative.* Chap. 4. 11. *I have taught thee in the way of wisdom, and led thee in right paths.* Wisdom hath its way, and feet to walk in it; and this way of wisdom is a right path: Or, *right-holy-actions* (saith *Piscator*) so the Ancients take Wisdom. *Cicero* calls it, *The* (*b*) *Art of living.* That wisdom which doth nothing, is worth nothing. (*c*) *All wisdom lies in this one thing* (saith *Lactantius*) *That we know and worship God.* (*d*) *Religion is wrapt up in Wisdom, and Wisdom in Religion.* (*e*) *The work of Wisdom lies in this, that contemning earthly things, by which we were formerly held, serving and desiring these frail perishing things, we may now be directed to seek after the eternal reward of a heavenly*

(*a*) *Quantum ad effectum initium sapientiæ est unde sapientia incipit operari.* Aquin. (*b*) *Sapientia quæ ars vivendi putanda est non expeteretur si nihil efficeret.* Cicero de fini. (*c*) *Omnis sapientia hominis in hoc uno est ut Deum cognoscat & colat.* Lact. de Institut, lib. 2, cap. 30. (*d*) *In sapientia religio, in religione sapientia est,* Lact. lib. 2. chap. 3. (*e*) *Cujus vis & efficium in eo vertitur ut contemptis terrestribus quibus antea tenebamur fragilibus servientes, & fragilia concupiscentes ad æterna cœlestis thesauri præmia dirigamur,* Lact. de Inst. cap. 27.

Treasure: (so saith *Aquinas*) (*f*) Wisdom is not to be considered onely as it leads to a knowledge of God; but as it directs and orders the life according to divine Rules: And in this sense I take Wisdom here for true Holiness; that Wisdom which is manifested in a Heavenly, Gospel conversation, the Merchandise of which is so advantageous.

The Merchandise thereof: Objectively considered: The trading for this Wisdom, or Merchandizing about; so the Septuagint renders it, Κρεῖσσον γὰρ ἀντὶν ἐμπορεύεσθαι, To Merchandise, is to buy and sell, to get in, and put off goods, to take in, and lay out: this Wisdom is better than to get in gold, or any thing that gold can buy, סחרת from סחר, the word is, to go up and down here and there as Merchants do, to buy and vend their goods; to travel abroad now in one place, then in another; to be full of distraction, tumbling up and down to get and put of their wares: So busie a work is Merchandizing, which takes up mens thoughts, time and labours to follow it, that they might get some advantage in the world. And such is the work of Religion; it is an active work that calls for the heart, time and strength, if ever souls think to turn it to any account: And they that do thus, that make Religion their work, that lay out themselves and their all in pursuit of Heaven and spiritual things, whatever cost and pains they are at, if they can but gain these treasures of god-

(*f*) *Sapientia secundum nos non solum consideratur ut est ad cognitiva Dei, sed etiam ut directiva humanæ vitæ secundum rationes divinas.* Aq. in. 22æ. q. 19. 7. c.

liness

lineſs, and obtain Wiſdomes wares, they make a good bargain; for the profit that comes by theſe is far better than ſilver, yea than fine gold: The Septuagint hath it: (a) *Than to get the treaſures of ſilver and gold*; yea the beſt gold, beaten gold.

There is another ſenſe that one gives the words, taking Wiſdome for the price by which thoſe great and eternal things are got: (I rather like the inſtrument than the price) ſpiritual things are freely given, not bought; *Iſa.* 55. 1. but thoſe that lay out, and improve their Wiſdome to gain grace, to promote godlineſs, and further ſalvation, make a better bargain than they that lay out their treaſures of gold and ſilver to buy the beſt goods on earth: In either ſenſe it's a truth, Wiſdome's merchandiſe is the beſt merchandiſe, to trade about ſpiritual things grace and glory is incomparably the beſt trade: Whence obſerve this Doctrine or Poſition.

Doct. *The heavenly Trade is the beſt Trade; no Merchandiſe like Wiſdom's Merchandiſe, and traffiquing about ſpiritual and eternal things.*

This Truth will evidently appear, if you conſider,

1. *The nature of thoſe things about which Wiſdomes Merchants trade.*
2. *The Perſon they deal with.*
3. *The Terms they trade upon.*

(a) Ἠχρυσίου καὶ ἀργυρίου θησαυρίοις.

4 The

4. *The gain that comes by it.*

Reaſ. 1. Firſt, The things about which this Heavenly trade is taken up, are in their nature things of greateſt worth; wares which all the worlds treaſures cannot purchaſe or compare with; they are all great, glorious and excellent things; nothing, mean, contemptible and uſeleſs, among all the goods that Wiſdom propoſes to Souls choice and reception: *The favour of God: Redemption from Hell: Pardon of Sin: Peace with God: The Graces of the Spirit: Communion with Father, Son and Spirit, with Saints and Angels: Walking with God: Spiritual bleſſings: Joy in the Holy Ghoſt: Heavenly Treaſures: Aſſurance of Glory.* Theſe are all things of incomparable value, and the things that Heavenly Traders deal about: And are not theſe far better in their nature, than the low, dirty, fading things of this world? No Onyx, Saphire, Chryſtal, Coral, Pearl, Topaz, Rubies, or the moſt coſtly pieces of Nature, can compare with this Pearl of price; this Stone cut out of the Mountains, or thoſe Spiritual Treaſures which are the ſubject of this Heavenly Trade: Let thoſe be Judges who know the worth of things; call in Wiſdom's Lapidaries, let God, Saints and Angels ſpeak in this matter, their verdict will be, Wiſdom's Wares weigh down all, as to their innate excellency: I ſhall onely propoſe three evidences to determine this caſe, and they are of unqueſtionable verity, and a ſufficient proof of this truth. They are,

1. *Scripture.*
2. *Experience.*
3. *Reaſon.*

Firſt

First, The Scriptures will tell you, there are no Wares like Heavenly Wares, *Deut.* 32, 32. *Their Rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being Judges. His loving-kindness is better than life*, Psalm 63. 3. *And the light of his countenance, than the encreases of corn and wine, and Oyl*, Psalm 4. 6, 6. *The Law of thy mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver*. Psalm 11 . 72. *Tryed faith much better than gold that perisheth*, 1 Pet. 1. 7. *One day in God's Courts better than a thousand elsewhere*, Psal. 84. 10. *None in Heaven like to God, nor any on earth in comparison of him*, Psal. 73. 25. To make provision for the Soul is the one thing needful: to enjoy Christ and spiritual things is the better part that shall never be taken away, *Luke* 10. 42. The Kingdom of God is the chiefest thing to be sought for in the first place, *Matth.* 6. 33. first in affection, and first in time: Multitude of testimonies might be produced from Scripture to attest this truth, That the Heavenly Trade is the best Trade; no goods like heavenly goods: what do you trade for here? is it for more than life you plot, you work for? you gain no more here than meat, drink, rayment, money, land, credit, and the like, which only tend to life: but the favour of God is better than life: one gracious look, one whisper of peace from God, weighs down all those: riches, pleasures, honours, do not make a happy man or woman; the Scripture never reports such blessed as have the abundance of these things, but rather miserable and unhappy, obnoxious to more snares and dangers; but godliness makes a blessed man, and

pardon

pardon of ſin a happy man, in God's account, *Pſal.* 1. 1, 2. and 32. 1. whoſe teſtimony is truth it ſelf, and to be relied on beyond all the grounds of blinded opinion, and falſe hopes.

Secondly, Experience aſſures men of this truth, that the heavenly things are the beſt things; come to a Soul that hath tried both: one who hath had all that the World could afford on the one hand, and hath alſo experienced the favour of God, and ſpiritual things, and he will tell you of ſpiritual things, as *David* did of *Goliah*'s Sword: *There is none like them*, 1 *Sam.* 21. 9. And as *Solomon* of the vertuous Wife: Theſe things above excell them all, *Prov.* 31. 29. *And wiſdom is much better than Gold, and to get underſtanding rather to be choſen than Silver*, *Prov.* 16. 16. This was *Solomon*'s experience, who had the largeſt trial of any man, he had Houſes, Vineyards, Gardens, Servants, Silver, Gold, the peculiar treaſures of Kings; Greatneſs, Pleaſure, Muſick, and whatſoever his eyes deſired: and upon all gives this verdict; *That wiſdom excelleth folly as far as light excels darkneſs*, *Eccl.* 2. 4, 13.

Piety tranſcendeth Pravity: Heaven the World: Purity out-paſſeth Pleaſures, as Light doth Darkneſs: When he ſpeaks of things below, he tells you; *Theſe are all vanity and vexation of ſpirit*; *he that labours for theſe, labours for the wind*, *Eccleſ.* 5. 16. and what he ſeeks, finds not; but when he ſpeaks of wiſdom, and ſpiritual things, he is as one that wants words to expreſs their worth: *Wiſdom is better than Rubies, and all the things that may be deſired, are not to be compared to it*, *Prov.* 8. 11. *David* was

a man

a man who had tried various conditions in the World, he knew what trouble and comfort was, what youth and age was, what poverty and riches were; he had pleasures, honours, treasures, with the hearts of his people, and command of a Kingdom, and yet he tells you, *he had seen an end of all perfection: and that the light of God's countenance was better than all, and to be a door-keeper* (a mean place) *in the house of God*, was more eligible, than to abide in the tents of wickedness: *Psal.* 119. 96. *Pr.* 4. 6. and 84. 10. He chooses it as his one thing, *To dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of his life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his Temple*, *Psal.* 27. 4.

Moses knew what honour was, and the pleasures of sin, and yet upon choice, preferr'd poverty with godliness, on the side of truth, before all the treasures of *Egypt*; *He refused to be called* Pharaoh's *Son, rather choosing to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ, greater riches than the treasures in* Egypt, *Heb.* 11. 24, 25, 26. He knew the Nobles of *Egypt*, and grandeur of *Pharaoh's* Court, and yet could value a poor persecuted people, that own'd God, and cleav'd to him, beyond them all: *Happy art thou, O* Israel! *who is like to thee? Deut.* 33. 20. He counts God the none-such; *Who is like to thee, O God? Ex.* 15. 11. and Religion the best interest; *Set your hearts unto all the words I testify; for it is not a vain thing for you, for it is your life, Deut.* 32. 46, 47.

Ask

Ask of *Paul*, and he will tell you what the fruit of ſin, and driving furiouſly againſt Chriſt and his intereſt was, when the Lord Jeſus came to reckon with, and to pay him off in the way to *Damaſcus*, *Acts* 9. 3, 4. whoſe blow he felt many years after, in Conſcience twitches now and then, 1 *Tim.* 1. 13, 15. And upon the ſenſe of that change Grace made on his heart and condition, he tells you, that *whatever he counted gain before, he ſaw now to be loſs for Chriſt*, Phil. 3. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. There was a time when he thought his letter-knowledge, blind zeal, birth-priviledges, legal duties, popular applauſe, Rulers favour, and protection by power, to be great things; but now he alters his reckoning, and values the knowledge of Chriſt, and intereſt in him, and grace derived from the power of his death and reſurrection, to be an excellency that ſtain'd all his former glory.

The Jaylor once thought it his greateſt intereſt to ſwim with the ſtream, and ſail by the compaſs of the times he lived in, to run down the ways and ſervants of the Lord Jeſus, to obey his warrant, and ſecure the Saints feet in his ſtocks, *Act.* 16. *ver.* 24, to 34. but when once Grace takes him in hand, and plucks him through the ſtrait-gate of conſcience, terrors, and repentance, into a ſtate of regeneration then he corrects his errors, and ſees it his chief-eſt concern to eſpouſe Chriſt, and to come over into the way of perſecuted godlineſs: then to believe in the Lord Jeſus, to be kind to his ſervants, and to drive the Trade of deſpiſed Chriſt anny: he thought upon moſt mature conſi-

deration

deration, to be worthy of his choice and pursuit. *What treasures more rich or precious* (said *Agerius*, when a prisoner for Christ at *Venice*) *than everlasting life? where be greater riches or dignities more honourable than in Heaven? here droppeth the delectable dew, here floweth the pleasant Nectar, here runneth the sweet milk, here is plenty of all good things; I have found a nest of honey in the entrals of a Lion, in the deep dark Dungeon; I have found a Paradise of pleasure; where others do weep, I do rejoyce; when others do shake and tremble, I do find plenty of strength, and boldness; in strait Bonds, and cold Irons, I have rest:* Fox, *Vol.* 2. *Pag.* 181. Come to sinners also when they lie under Conscience-terrors, and the armed troops of death and hell invade their guilty hearts, and inquire their opinion concerning the goodness of their choice, the advantage of that bargain they have made, in parting with God for the World, in rejecting Christ for the Flesh, in turning their backs on holiness, for the service of sin: and their dejected countenances, their gastly looks, their unquiet gestures, their cries and groans, will soon tell you the sad resentment of their folly, and bad Trade they have driven in the ways of sin and death.

Thirdly, Nay Reason it self rightly exercised, must needs grant, that heavenly wares are the best wares upon a fourfold consideration.

1 *Of their Rarity.*
2 *Their Price.*
3 *Their worth.*
4 *Their duration.*

First

First, Heavenly things are rare, and therefore excellent; ſcarcity enhanceth the price of things; Diamonds and precious ſtones are dear, becauſe ſcarce, and more rarely had; plenty uſually beats down the price of things, when rarity makes them coſtly; and ſuch are Heavenly wares, they are the greateſt rarity in the world; they are leſs known, more hardly come by, and ſeldomer enjoyed than any thing this earth affords; there are few parts of the world where Wiſdom's goods ever come: How many Countreys are there where the Goſpel is not known? or any ſights of God, or things eternal ever had but ſuch as are diſcernable by the dim light of nature; and of thoſe coaſts which this days ſpring hath viſited, to how few have the Brightneſs of this light appeared? few places have the myſteries of the Goſpel opened, or the deep things of God purely, fully and powerfully preached. It hath been the priviledge of this Nation above many, to have a peculiar ſhare of Goſpel diſcoveries and truths, more ſpiritually and practically diſcloſed; and yet how few here, or in other parts, have any acquaintance with theſe glorious ſecrets? or arrive to this excellence of the knowledge of Chriſt, and Divine Myſteries? what a veil is there on the minds of moſt, under the pureſt adminiſtrations of the Goſpel, that ſeeing, they ſee not; underſtanding, and yet not affected with the things they know; the ſpiritual beauty, and inward worth of them being hid from their eyes. Moſt hearers (like *Balaam*) ſee heavenly goods with eyes half opened; and hence it is they no more value and purſue them: Could theſe poor, beggarly,

garly; dirty things of the world, be so preferred in mens affections and embraces, and so much time consumed upon them, with neglect of God, and things above, if the worth of Wisdome's Treasures were truly known and believed? no certainly, we may without breach of charity complain. *Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? Isa.* 53. 1. They are rare, in that they seldome appear in their own worth and excellency to the veiw of men: few know and believe the worth of heavenly things.

They are also goods that few trade on. It's a rare thing to see men much vers'd about heavenly things, and to drive a trade of godliness: There are divers possibly that barter for some of Wisdome's goods, for knowledge, peace, comfort, parts, external duties, *&c.* but few that carry on a full trade of godliness: An *Enoch*, a *Noah*, a *Caleb*, a *Joshua*, a *Job*, a *David*, a *Paul*, a *Barnabas*; here and there one in their several ages, that are thorough with God, and universal in the duties of godliness, heart-purity, godly simplicity, universal holiness, converse with God, meditation on things above, tenderness of conscience, self-denial, mortifiedness to the world, heavenly-mindedness, spiritual converses, are commodities that few deal about this day. A thorough-paced Christian is the Phœnix of the place he lives in, and more seldome seen than a sparkling Diamond in the dark night we live in; few seek these goods in earnest, as they do the world and their own thing, and fewer obtain them, *Phil.* 2. 21. Few I fear do live in the

daily exercise of their graces, the warm breathings of their souls after God and spiritual things: few that find the white stone, that live in the view of their pardons, and sensible enjoyment of divine grace; and therefore these heavenly goods are rare things, seldome discovered, seldome known, seldome pursued, seldome injoyed; and being rare, are excellent and desirable.

Secondly, Heavenly things are the best, because the most costly; this argument will not hold in all things: men may buy their desired comforts too dear, and give more for the world, pleasures, and their particular goods, than they are worth; but none can be deceived in Wisdome wares; the glory of God, the salvation of souls, the enjoyment of grace and spiritual blessings, cannot be too dearly obtained; their price bespeaks the greatness of their worth, they being realities and things excellent in their nature and use; and if they are valuable according to their price, they must needs be transcendent; for the purchase of them cost God dear; he hath been at the expence of eternal counsels of manifold wisdom, of unknown love, of the gift and blood of his own Son, to procure these great things for Believers; and it hath cost him mighty power and patience to fit Believers for them, and maintain their enjoyment of them: *Ye are bought with a price, not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish, and without spot.*

Ἠγορασθητε τιμῆς, with an honourable price. 1 *Pet.* 1. 18. 19. *Αντιλυτρον æquale redemptionis pretium*, Gomar.

spot. He gave himself a ransome, an equal price sufficient to purchase Believers to himself, with grace and glory for them: *He so loved the world as to give his onely begotten Son, to give him to death*, to the death of the Cross, to unspeakable torments, and all to procure these glorious and blessed treasures for Believers, *Joh.* 3. 16. O costly wares! O dear bought goods! for which the pearl of price was sold, and the treasures of Heaven emptied out.

And as these stand the purchaser dear, so they are costly to the receiver also: The preparation for an interest in these treasures, is many times dear to Believers: O the wounds and launcings, the bleeding and heart-prickings, the pangs and throws that lead the van to this banner of love, which redemption grace spreads over saved souls; these are the stormy tempests, the bloody skirmishes, that go before the Believers reception of purchased peace: Besides, the terms on which this good bargain is offered, though infinitely beneath its worth, yet as to the souls capacity are high, it's no less than a throwing of all its former treasures over-board, a parting with its neerest interests, and dearest comforts that lye in the way of its enjoyments; a plucking out a right eye, and cutting off a right hand; a denying (O hard saying!) of a man's own beloved self; a not onely bearing when laid on, but a taking up not the Cross of Christ alone, but his own Cross too, whatever his own sins, or the hand of men and Devils may make for him; and in this plight not to sit down, or stand still, but to go on and follow

Christ up the hill, through thick and thin, through scorns and thorns, day and night, through every change, in every state, home to the grave: No easier terms are given to the enjoyment of these riches, than a hearty consent to these proposals, which may expose the soul to an actual loss of his earthly all, and undergoing unknown tryals, troubles and duties in the way: This bargain, though blessed in it self, yet is thought so dear by some, as that they break upon these very terms, and think God, grace and glory, too chargeable for their acceptance: This then sets off the worth of heavenly things, that they cost so much upon choice, and upon the highest reason and deliberation.

Thirdly, As their price is high, so is their worth great; they are good in themselves, and good to those that have them. *Hearken diligently unto me, and eat that which is good, and let your souls delight it self in fatness*; earthly things are not so, if good in themselves, yet they may not be good to those that have them: Riches are snares and swords to the owners thereof, and oftentimes do pierce them thorough with many sorrows: They are not onely good, but absolutely good; other things are not so; earthly things are but conditionally good when God sees them good, and makes them good, so long as he doth bless them, and let out something of himself through them, manna, food, rayment, nether springs, are so far good, as God is pleased to convey out some spiritual good thorough them, or make them some way subservient

servient thereto; these things cannot make men happy, or prove them so. *Nebuchadnezzar*'s greatness could not secure him from grazing amongst the beasts, and bedding with them in open fields, and under wetting dews, *Dan.* 4. 33. *Belshazzar*'s pleasures could not guard him from the hand-writing against the wall, *Dan.* 5. 5. *Dives* was in the midst of plenty and honour one day, and the next day in hell. These lower things are but as cisterns and pipes. that signifie nothing, except some waters be conveyed through them; no more do these, unless God let out his love, and promise through them. These heavenly things are not only absolutely good, but every way good; good for every man, in every state; good for poor and rich, for young and old, for all persons, all things; *Godliness is profitable for every thing*, 1 *Tim.* 4. 8. There is no person or condition, but grace and spiritual blessings are good for, & can convey good thorough: There may be such a case in which nothing of this lower world can help: *Riches make them wings and profit not in the day of wrath.* In times of trouble and divine wrath, instruments of musick carry no sweetness in them but spiritual mercies, they help to comfort in the day of trouble: *In the multitude of sad thoughts within me, thy comforts refresh my soul, Psal.* 94. 19.

Fourthly, Their duration proves them excellent, they are lasting wares; time works no change upon these, the Heavens will wax old, and as a vesture they shall be changed; but heavenly things never perish with the using: in-

deed our measures and sense of these may change, we may not always have the same degrees of grace or comfort; but this alteration is not in these things, but in us; as God; so grace and spiritual things, are in themselves the same, yesterday, to day, and for ever: good in prosperity, and good in adversity; good in life, and good in death: mutability mars all earthly comforts, they are things of no continuance: we may have them, but cannot hold them: like the fleeting Islands about the *Teneriff*, which persons see at a distance, but when they come near them, they vanish away: *The things that are seen are temporal*, 2 *Cor.* 4. 18. *We may* (a) *have them*, (saith *Seneca*) *but cannot possess them; and they no sooner please us, but pass from us*: but unseen things are eternal: His love is everlasting; the graces of his Spirit abiding: 1 *Joh.* 3. 9. *Whosoever is born of God sinneth not, for his seed remaineth in him*: The joys of the Holy-Ghost are lasting: *That my joy might remain in you*, *Jer.* 31. 3. *Job.* 15. 11. *Isa.* 59. 21. *Heb.* 10. 34. 1 *Pet.* 1. 4. Indeed acts of grace may fail for a time, but the habit of grace is never lost; frames, and streams of comfort may ebb, but the Fountain of Joy is never drain'd dry: Justification is immutable, Pardon of Sin is irreversible, the Saints treasures in Heaven are enduring, and can never fade away: Men may out live their Treasures here, and see all their Portions go before them: but heavenly Interest, and immortal Souls, are of like continuance

(a) *Ostenduntur ista res non possidentur, & dum placent transeunt.*

and

and this greatens their value: Men estimate in little Land beyond a great Estate of uncertain continuance: and such are Wisdom's wares, there's no rotten goods among them.

Reas. 2. Secondly, The heavenly Trade is the best Trade, in regard of the Trader these Merchants deal with: Much of the comfort, safety and advantage of mens Trades, lieth in in the persons they Trade with: if these be able, honest, affectionate, it conduces much to the thriving of those they deal with: What mischief comes to Traders, when Sellers are cheating, cruel, and extortioning? and when Buyers are false, and deceitful, and fail of their word? But none of these hazards can heavenly Teaders be exposed to, from those they deal with: Indeed Wisdom's Merchants have to do with many, in the pursuit of their heavenly Trade, both by way of taking in, and letting out; but yet there is one great Merchant with whom they principally deal, as to the management and issue of their whole Trade, in this Merchandise; they converse with God, Saints and Angels, but all is done through a Mediator; the Goods they receive is upon his interest; they deal with God through him; all their wisdom to trade, and rules to act by, come from him the good and advantage of all their Trading, is secur'd by him; and though they may be concern'd with many persons and things, (with all, that duty and providence calls them too,) and with the Chymist, are to extract some good from every thing they deal with; and, like the Bee, gather Honey from weeds; yet this good

they get from persons and things, is not in them, but conveyed through them from the great Purchaser with whom they deal; good from every thing, to these heavenly Traders, and Heirs of Salvation is made over in the promise; (*All things shall work together for good to them that love God, and are called according to his purpose,*) *Rom.* 8. 28. and shall in due time, through these Conduits, be emptied out to Believers, by the hand of Jesus: So that it is properly, and strictly, but with one great Merchant those Traders have to do with for the goods they lay out, or take in; all other things and persons are but ways and instruments of his appointment, through which it shall be delivered; and this makes Wisdom's Trade so good, that the advantage of it is not depending on those secondary Agents, they have to do with but upon one, that is more excellent, both great and good, able and faithful to answer both his promises, and the expectations of those that deal with him. As to his Quality, and personal Grandeur, he is above all, and over all, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords: *He hath a vesture on his thigh, whereon is written, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, Rev.* 19. 16. He is the Majesty on high, the Glory of Heaven and Earth; he hath Angels to worship him, Thrones and Principalities under him, all creatures in Heaven and in Earth to serve him. O! how honourable is it to deal with him, to whom Kings and Potentates pay their tribute, and to whom Men and Angels yeild their homage? It's taking with Men, to converse with those that are above

above them, and to manage concerns with Persons of Honour, and Greatness: but here's one (Souls) that offers to trade with you, from whom all creatures receive their glory.

Yea, his Goodness answers his Greatness, and sweetly tempers his personal converse for the encouragement of the meanest Soul, that hath occasions with him: Greatness without Goodness, rather checks than relieves the hopes of those that are beneath it; but such is the sweetness of Christ's nature, as that his Glory doth but render his Goodness the more amiable; and his Goodness represents his Glory the more desireable; he values no man by his own worth, nor despises any for their low estate; the meanest Soul hath as easy access to him, and as gracious a reception, as persons of highest reputation with men: *I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones, Isa.* 57. 15. He is of a sweet and gracious temper, of a free and generous spirit, good to all, especially to those that seek him: this renders persons desirable, who would choose to deal with men of ugly natures, and churlish dispositions: affability and sweetness do strongly invite men to converse with such; and none like to Jesus for excellent goodness and loving kindness, for pitty and bounty; goodness is his nature, mercy his delight; he takes pleasure in doing good; none that trade with him, but he will see them to be the better for it.

He is also able as well as good: Some men have

have excellent natures, but straitened capacities, they are willing to do good beyond their power: but it is not so with the Saints friend: *He hath all power in Heaven and Earth, Mat.* 28. 18. and can do what-ever pleaseth him: he hath all creatures at his command: all the treasures of Heaven at his dispose: he is infinitely rich, and hath all that good that Souls can need or desire: he hath goods of all kinds to supply his Customers with: it is not so with men, no Merchant can furnish his Traders with every thing they need: but one sells this ware, another that: here men sail to one Countrey for one Commodity, and to another Countrey for other Wares: they ransack Nature's treasures by Sea and Land, borrow something from every Nation, that hath a peculiar exellency, to make up their supplies, and furnish all their occasions, and pleasures: but the Lord Jesus hath all that in him, and at his dispose, which you need: he can supply all your wants, having all fulness dwelling in him, *Phil.* 4. 19. He hath that in him which your Souls want, and the command of that you need for your Bodies also: He can give you the desires of your heart, *Psal.* 37. 4. *He is able to make all grace abound towards you, that you always, having all-sufficiency in all things, may abound in every good work,* 2 *Cor* 9. 8. Here's no less than five Alls, that flow from the ability of Christ to Believers: All grace abounding in them, All sufficiency enjoy'd by them, All ways, in All things, for All good works: Did Souls but believe the all-sufficiency of Christ,

they

they would not ſo perplex their ſpirits when in wants, with, what ſhall I eat? and with what ſhall I be clothed? and how ſhall I get this? and the other mercy I want, when all is offered to Wiſdom's Merchants freely? for godlineſs hath the promiſe of the life that now is, and of that which is to come: and theſe promiſes are in the hand of Jeſus, for all that come to God by him: *All things are delivered to me of the Father*, *Matt.* 11. 27. The Lord Jeſus is not only able to give you all that you ask according to his will, having all things delivered to him for that end: but he can keep it for you, and ſecure it to your uſe: *I am perſwaded that he is able to keep that good thing I have committed to him, againſt that day*, 2 *Tim.* 1. 12. This all-ſufficiency of Chriſt, is argument enough to new-Covenant-ſoederates, for a calm and quiet dependance on him, and holy walking before him, *Gen.* 17. 1.

And that which is exceeding pleaſing to Traders alſo, he is faithful as well as able: he is one of his word, that makes good all his promiſes to a tittle, to thoſe that by Faith deal with him: *The holy one of* Iſrael *cannot lie, or alter the word that is gone out of his mouth; hath he ſaid, and ſhall he not do it? hath he ſpoken, and ſhall he not make it good? Numb.* 23. 19. and *Rev.* 1. 5. He is the faithful Witneſs: faithful is his name. *And he that ſate upon the Throne was called faithful and true*, *Rev.* 19. 11. And faithfulneſs is his nature, in compariſon of whom every a man is a liar: *Let God be true, and every man a liar*, *Rom.* 3. 4. If the Lord Jeſus were

not

not faithful to his word and undertaking, the Father would not have trusted him with all the concerns of his glory and people in the world; neither had he been a fit person for the Elect to have committed unto him their souls, and all that is dear to them: Men promise one thing, and do another: affirm a thing that is not, and this undoes many, the unfaithfulness of those they deal with; but it is not so with Christ, you may trust on his fidelity: Heaven and Earth shall sooner fail, than one tittle of all that he hath spoken: And therefore excellent is that Trade which is carried on with so excellent a Jesus.

Reas. 3. Thirdly, Weigh the terms on which this Trade is offered unto souls, and it will appear to be incomparably the best Trade. For to such as will set upon this Trade,

1 *Goods to trade upon shall be freely given.*

2 *Wisdom to manage them will be fully imparted.*

3 *A blessing on the due improvement of them shall be ensured.*

4 *To him shall the glory of all be rendred.*

First, Wisdome's wares are freely tendered to all that will receive them, without money, and without price: *Come buy wine and milk without money and without price, Isa.* 55. 1. *To him that is a thirst will I give to drink of the waters of life freely, Rev.* 21. 6. Here Merchants cannot get or put off goods at that rate; there's no going to the world's markets without money or credit: they that will have mens goods must pay for them, and many times have dear bargains:

gains; but the Lord Jesus imparts his treasures freely, he paid dear for them, they cost his heart blood, but he spares them freely; no silver or gold will pass in those bargains. *Simon Magus* had his offered gold, for the Holy Ghost, thrown back with detestation and destruction to boot, *Acts* 8. 18, 19, 20. The terms on which this trade is driven are free; it cannot stand with the design of redemption grace, which is to advance the praise of the glory of grace, and to cut of all boasting, that every mouth may be stopped; to admit of any thing from fallen man that might look like a compensation of salvation mercies; neither is there any thing beneath Christ's merits, that can equalize the worth of heavenly things: and alas what have they to part with, who have lost themselves? and to give to God, who have nothing but what they receive from him? It must needs therefore be altogether freely given, whatever is received in order to salvation: O blessed news to poor traders, that their poverty is no bar to this employment: the poorest may receive of Wisdome's wares, as well as the rich, seeing it is a free trade: and whatever makes a difference on the creatures part, is laid aside in the dispensation of spiritual mercies: Here are no Monopolies, or hard impositions upon this trade: no restraint from setting up, or selling out of Wisdome's goods, in any parts of the world. Cities have their enclosures, Corporations their bars to keep out strangers from their priviledges: but in this trade all persons, be they who they will that will come over to Wisdome's Merchandise,

chandiſe, have right to carry on this work of godlineſs in all places whereever they are. The heavenly trade is a free trade, goods freely given, and liberty to ſet up in all places, and to all perſons.

Secondly, As goods to trade upon are freely given; ſo wiſdome to manage them ſhall be fully imparted: This is a priviledge which ſellers on earth will not afford; you may have their goods at their price, but not inſtructions how to diſpoſe them to your advantage; but this great Merchant in Heaven, with his wares, gives skill to uſe them: *I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way thou ſhouldeſt go, Iſa.* 48. 17. *If thou ſeekeſt her as ſilver, and ſearcheſt for her as for hid treaſure, then ſhalt thou underſtand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God: For the Lord giveth wiſdome, out of his mouth cometh knowledge and underſtanding: He layeth up ſound wiſdome for the righteous. Then ſhalt thou underſtand righteouſneſs, and judgement, and equity; yea every good path, Prov.* 2. 4, 5, 6, 9. The ſoul that ſeeketh for Wiſdome's wares, ſhall with it find inſtruction how to uſe them: *I will inſtruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou ſhouldeſt go. I will guide thee with my eyes, Pſal.* 32, 8. He will be *eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame, Job.* 29. 15. the Lord Jeſus will find all in this heavenly trade, goods, and tools, and skill, and ſtrength, and all: *Surely ſhall one ſay, in the Lord have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength.*

Thirdly, A bleſſing on the due improvement of theſe ſhall be enſured to all his traders: *The way-*

wayfaring man shall not erre, Isa. 35. 8. His workmen shall not labour in vain, 1 *Cor.* 15. 58. *For his blessing is upon his people, Psal.* 3. 8. *Thou shalt decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee, and the light shall shine upon thy waies, Job* 22. 21. *The book of the Law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein,* (this is the heavenly trade, to fulfill after God and such shall prosper;) *for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success, Josh.* 1. 8. No Merchant will undertake to make their dealers prosperous; they must trade at great uncertainties, and run the adventure as to the issue of all: Blessings come not out of earthly shops, but from a divine hand, let come what will in the way: Blessings will surely come at the end to those that cast out at Christ's biding, and trade by his instruction in Wisdome's Merchandise, let men curse, let devils vex, let North-winds blow, and blow down too their earthly comforts, *yet God will bless them that fear him, every one, Psal.* 115. 13. He will bless them in life, and bless them in death; and is not this good trading, to be sure of blessings in the way, and blessedness at the end? 1 *Pet.* 1. 5.

Fourthly, Another Condition in this Trade is, That God shall have all the glory, but they that trade with and for him shall have all the good that comes by it: This is the head Rent which the great Lord reserves to himself, and will not part with to another: *My glory will I not give to another, Isa.* 41. 11. This is his great

design

design in all the works of his hands, and gifts of grace, that he may be glorified: *The people shall be all righteous, the branch of my Planting, the work of my hand, that I may be glorified.* This is God's great end in bestowing redemption mercies, to have all the glory to himself, *who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, that we should be to the praise of his glory, Ephes.* 1. 12. Christians, the Rent must be the Lords, the fruit shall be yours: *Who so keepeth the fig-tree shall eat the fruit thereof. Prov.* 27. 18. All the sweetness of the Vine is for those that possess it, and the herbs of the earth for them by whom it is dressed, *Judg.* 9. 13. *Heb.* 6. 7. *The righteous shall eat the fruit of his doings, Isa.* 3. 10. The present comforts of holiness are not mean: *Great peace have they that love thy Law, and nothing shall offend them, Psal.* 119. 165. *Her waies are waies of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.* Religion is the most pleasant trade; no delights like those that are in God, and fetch'd from him: God gives the world the bones and keeps the marrow for his labourers; the godly feed on the wheat, the wicked have but the bran: look whatever good, comfort, credit and happiness Religion can afford here, and to all eternity, is their part that trade upon it: *Who planteth a Vineyard, and eateth not the fruit thereof,* 1 *Cor.* 7. 9.

Reas. 4. Lastly, The Heavenly Trade must needs be the best trade, because it is the most profitable trade: This advantage that comes by godliness, makes it the best employment in the world. We use to say, three things make traders

ders rich, all which are found in the way of godliness.

1 Great
2 Sure } Returns.
3 Quick

Now nothing turns to more account than a thorough pursuit of piety: whatever men think, Religion is the most thriving way, in regard of the

Excellent
Abundant } Fruit } of it.
Durable

First, Great returns will soon make traders rich, when the time and labour they expend is abundantly compensated, and the things they part with, bring in far better: so is it with this heavenly trade: there is no proportion in their adventures to their returns: their duties are poor imperfect things: when they have done all, they are unprofitable servants, but their reward is great and glorious; their afflictions light and momentary, but the issue, a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, 2 *Cor.* 4. 18. It's great profit indeed, when some weak works of faith, and labours of love, a little patience, obedience and duty for a time, shall be rewarded with eternal rest, pleasure and glory: there is no equality between the race and price, this striving and crowning: What's a cup of cold water, to a river of pleasures? a Crown of

thorns, to a Crown of Glory? the worlds frowns, to divine ſmiles? conſcience-troubles, to the conſolations of God? a few tears, fears, watchings, faintings, duties, afflictions, to the joys of the Lord, into which they ſhall for ever enter?

It's a great bargain to part with baſe things, for excellent; beaſtly luſts, for the beauties of holineſs: an unclean, for a clean heart; vile affections for vertuous diſpoſitions; filthy rags, for fair garments; a body of death, for a ſpirit of life. To let go the world for God, fellowſhip with devils, for communion with Chriſt, to loſe guilt, and to gain righteouſneſs, to eſcape Hell, to obtain Heaven, this is great gain. To ſwap away old things, for new: rotten things, for ſound: hypocriſie, for ſincerity: lies, for truth, is a good bargain. To exchange empty things, for ſatisfying: things that are not for things that are: goods that periſh with the uſing, for things that wax not old: fading trifles for eternal treaſures: is a thriving trade indeed: and ſuch are the incomes of this Heavenly Trade, they are incomparably great and excellent, there's nothing mean, no low price goods, that Wiſdome's Merchants deal about, all their riches are pleaſant and precious: *By knowledge ſhall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleaſant riches*, precious faith, precious promiſes, the precious blood of Chriſt, precious thoughts of God are ſome of this precious ſubſtance heavenly Traders meet with in the way of holineſs. Beſides, this purſuit of godlineſs enters ſouls into an acquaintance and converſe with God, and helps them

to keep an entercourſe with Heaven and to maintain a life above and beyond the reach of all others; and is not this great advantage?

Religion alſo helps men to bleſſed experiences of the love, power, greatneſs and faithfulneſs of God; and this conſtant employment about heavenly things, makes the way pleaſant and delightful, and fills the ſoul with much contentment with its lot in the world, whatever the tryals, loſſes and ſufferings may be that they are expoſed to. Alſo the driving this Heavenly Trade ſecures the good and comfort of all their other intereſts, and ſweetens their portion, whether more or leſs, that Sovereign pleaſure allots them in the world, bringing all their concerns under divine care and promiſe for their good, comfort and ſufficient ſupply in their paſſage home: And are not all theſe great returns enough to make the Heavenly Trade the greateſt intereſt and advantage beyond all others in the world.

Secondly, Sure returns make Traders rich: Merchants that drive gainfull trades, count if one Adventure to two or three come ſafely home, they get well: but all regular Adventures in this Heavenly Trade are ſecured, *Their labour ſhall not be in vain in the Lord*, 1*Cor.* 15. 58. not one of their ſincere attempts in the way of God ſhall miſcarry: never a pious duty loſt; all their ſowings to the ſpirit ſhall ſurely ſpring up into a bleſſed harveſt, *Gal.* 6. 6. *Though they ſow in tears, yet they ſhall reap in joy*, *Pſal.* 126. 5,6. Though they go forth weeping, yet if they bear precious ſeed, they ſhall doubtleſs come

again with rejoycing, bringing their ſheaves with them: *God is not unrighteous to forget their work and labour of love ſhewn towards his Name*, *Heb.* 6. 10. God is ingaged in juſtice to ſee the Adventures of Believers ſafely returned into their harbour; he hath promiſed it and cannot be unfaithful; neither doth it conſiſt with his honour, to put Believers on an unprofitable ſervice: *he never ſaid to the houſe of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain*, *Iſa.* 45. 19. Ingenious men love to ſee their ſervants thrive: Will Chriſt think you, let his labourers be loſers? their works ſhall ſurely follow them into their reſt, *Rev.* 14. 13. how ever they may be out of ſight in their paſſage towards it, ſeeing God's Word lies at ſtake for it.

The blood of Chriſt ſtands engaged alſo for the ſafe returns of the Saints Adventures, that are according to the will of God; their religious labours are part of the travel of his ſoul, which he muſt ſee ſecured, and they are the pleaſure of the Lord, which muſt proſper in his hand, *Iſa.* 53. 10. 11. He is become a Surety for them unto God, and a Surety for the Father unto them: *By ſo much was Jeſus made a Surety of a better teſtament*, *Heb.* 7. 22. The Covenant is called here a Teſtament, as relating to the Saints priviledges and intereſts, which by that Covenant becomes due to them, and ſhall be ſurely made good to them upon the account of Chriſt's Suretiſhip for it: He is the Surety of this Teſtament or Covenant, and every promiſe of it: one of which is, That what they Sow to the Spirit, they ſhall reap in glory: their labour

ſhall

shall not be in vain: and to make all the promises good, both the condition and blessing to the fœderates of this new-Covenant, hath the Lord Jesus laid down his precious Blood, which cannot be lost, *Heb.* 9. 15. but it would be cast away, could Believers religious duties be in vain.

Another thing that secures the Saints advantages by this heavenly Trade, is this; that their trading is the work and product of his own Spirit; their duties are his work: *Thou hast wrought all our works in us, Isa.* 26. 22. *It is God that worketh in you to will and to do, according to his good pleasure, Phil.* 2. 13. *Not that we are sufficient of our selves to think any thing of our selves, but our sufficiency is of God, 2 Col.* 3. 5. *They are his workmanship, created to good works, Eph.* 2. 10. by whose influence they are acted, and led by the spirit of God, *Rom.* 8. 14. So that further than the spirit of the living creatures move; their wheels cannot move, nor do any thing graciously, further than their works are wrought of God, and by God, *Joh.* 3. 21. So that Believers labours in this heavenly Trade, are the works of the eternal Spirit; and should their work be lost, the Spirit of God would labour in vain, and his work cast away; which cannot be, *Isa.* 45. 18.

Lastly, The Lord Jesus is an adventurer with them, his Glory and Kingdom is concerned in this heavenly Trade: when his Will is done, his Kingdom is come, *Mat.* 6. 10. and *1 Thes.* 4. 3. Holiness is his will, and a conformity to his Law, and he is engag'd to the Father, for the

Saints holineſs and happineſs, for their grace and glory, *As thou haſt given him power over all fleſh, that he ſhould give eternall life to as many as thou haſt given him*, *Jo.* 17.2, 12. The Father hath put all believers into the hands of Chriſt, and intruſted him with their graces and glory, both which are included in eternal life: *ver.* 3. *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, &c.* that is, this is the way to life eternal and the beginning of life eternal, even the grace of Faith, and ſaving knowledge of God: and this grace, as well as glory, is put into the hand of Chriſt for Beleivers, to be kept for them; and they are alſo put into his hand, to be kept by him through it unto glory: and in purſuance of this truſt, the Lord Jeſus is engaged, to keep his people: their graces, and the reward of them, for them, that they be not loſt; the advantages of this heavenly Trade, are ſecured to Beleivers by the Lord Jeſus, his adventure with them, his truth, faithfulneſs, and glory, is concern'd in their ſafety: ſo that their returns are not only great, but ſure.

Thirdly, Quick returns, if great, are greatly enriching: Hence comes that Proverb, that light gain makes a heavy purſe, it brings great cuſtom, and that occaſions quick returns: Now, no Trade brings quicker returns than the heavenly Trade: *Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me*, *Rev.* 22. 12. *The Lord* Jeſus not only makes good, but quick Payment; as ſoon as the work is done, he promiſeth to make good his word: *Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee*, *Pſal.* 50. 15. Nay, the

the Lord Jesus sometimes pays before hand: *And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and whiles they are speaking, I will hear,* Is 65.24. Men many times are forc'd to stay for their Money, and sometimes lose it at last, but the Believers gain is not only sure, but speedy.

Obj. *What's reason then, the people of God do complain of God's not hearing, and deferring an answer to their requests? And why are Believers advised to patience, and long-suffering after they have done the will of God, if the return of their Faith and Duties were so quick? This is the experience, and complaint of the people of God in all ages, that God seems not to regard their Praiers, and to delay his comming to help them.*

Sol. 1. First, yet are the Saints returns quick, because they are in due time, God never delays to perform his word, when the Beleiver hath need of it, in the needful time of trouble, he will surely hear, *My God shall supply all your wants, Phil.* 4.19. When once the Soul comes to stand in real want, then God will surely pay him, *When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, Isa.* 40. 17. When once they come to be needy, then God will with-hold no longer, but will help, this he hath promised, *they shall not want any good thing. Psal.*34. 10.

Secondly, If the Lord do not pay presently, he will give use for it, they shall lose nothing by forbearance, *But when he comes, he will bring*

his reward with him, Isa. 40. 10. Not only a reward of his work done by them, but a reward of their patient waiting for his promises also, their mercy shall be so much the sweeter, for their want of it, and waiting for it. O! how welcome are long-look'd-for mercies, when they come, then is every mercy double; God tried *Job* long by with-holding mercy, but see the end of *Job*, God paid double for what he took, and with-held from him, *Job* 42. 10. Returns are sure always in the needful and seasonable time: and if God delays, he will pay well for it.

To which I might add this also: Many times Wisdom's Merchants are the cause of these delays, by their unfaithfulness in their trade, or their unfitness for their returns: *The diligent hand makes rich, Prov.* 10. 4. Souls that are active and faithful in the whole of Religion, shall have no cause to complain of God's slack payment.

So much by way of demonstration of the point, That the Heavenly Trade is the best Trade: no Merchandise like Wisdom's Merchandise.

Now, to come to some improvement of the Point.

USE I.

First, If the heavenly Trade be the best Trade, then it's strange that so few do set upon this Trade: persons that are to enter upon some course of life, and would fain live in the World, are

are willing to take the best Trade that is attainable by them, if they can but reach it, and have wherewithal to carry it on; who would spend his time and strength in low, fordid and mechanick services, which cannot maintain, or enrich him; if a brave, generous and wealthy Calling did offer it self, and might be compassed? and yet such is the folly of most under the Gospel, who are ready to choose any thing but Godliness, and to fall in with every proposal for their employment, rather than to engage about the work of Salvation: Men are wise in their generation, and know in other things how to choose the best bargains, only in the things of their Souls are foolish, and can be content to pursue shadows, and let go the substance; to lay out all their desires, hopes and labours about a life that perisheth, neglecting the vast concerns of another World, and the welfare of their immortal Souls: Is not this folly? Poor Sinners, let me reason a little with you, if possible to recover your lost understanding: come, be your own judges: Is it your interest (think you) to adventure your All, for things that cannot abide with you when obtained, nor satisfie you if they stay? things that can but bring you to your Grave, and accompany your bodies to the House of Mourning, and there leave you: unless they shew you the way to Hell also. Is it not madness to adventure your Souls for a trade, pleasures and treasures of so short continuance, and little advantage? things that you will shortly be as weary of, as now desirous, and throw them to the Bats and Moles

of

of the Earth, that you may go into the Rocks to hide you from the fury of a Sin avenging God? Will you ſpend all upon time, and lay up nothing for eternity? Or, is it rational to think that you ſhould reap where you never ſowed, and poſſeſs the benefit of that Trade you never drove? *Gal.* 6. 7, 8. Can you think to reach Heaven hereafter, and never walk one foot in the way to it here? Certainly, what men ſow, that they ſhall reap: Can you imagine the things of Heaven to be ſo cheap, as to be had without looking after? Alas, things far inferior cannot be ſo eaſily obtained; it may coſt ſome of you many tuggings, much ſweat, labour and expence to get but a little of this World; and do you think to find this tried Gold without buying, and digging for it? and is it a wiſe bargain (think you) to puchaſe your deſirable Comforts with the loſs of your Souls? and that you may gain but a little of the World, to part with a poſsibility of having Heaven? *What will it profit you to get the world,* (were you ſure of every part of it) *and to loſe your Souls? Mat.* 16. 26, And what if you miſs of your hopes in this, and fall ſhort of Heaven too? never have what you look'd for on Earth, nor a place in Heaven neither; will not your caſe be then dreadful? O! fooliſh Souls! that may be happy, but will not; that may get into ſuch a courſe of life as would enrich you here, and for ever; but refuſe it, preferring a poor beggarly life before a rich and noble ſtate; chooſing rather to trade with Devils than God: to ſwap away your delight-

ful

ful time, for doleful eternity; your salvation-prises, for swinish pleasures. O sad exchange for! to be bewailed, but not remedied: What? to barter away strength for weakness; desires for emptiness, labours for vanity, hope for despair, precious souls for perishing shadows, an open door of grace for a shut door of glory; mercy for misery, earth for hell? O fools in grain! to let go such a bargain, as being had, would for ever make you, and being lost may never be regained, but in the room of it, an eternity to repent your time of folly, when tears and cries will be too late, when mercy shall have no repentings for you, bowels themselves no roulings over you, nor everlasting arms any help for you, *Mat.* 25. 10. This is your danger (Sinners,) this may be your case, who refuse wisdom's counsels, chooſing death rather than life: you that would have none of Wisdom's wares, nor work. but have rather valued the Devil's counters, before Christ's Gold, and the pleasures of sin, that are but for a season, before the treasures of grace and glory, that are eternal, walking after the flesh, and serving divers lusts, till your trading time for Heaven be almost over. Alas, Sinners, there may be, for any thing you know, but few Merchandising hours left for you in this World, it may be scarce a Sabbath more between some of you, and hell: in what a case then are you like to be, who never set upon this heavenly Trade to this very day? and should you now go out of this World strangers to this employment, in what a doleful state will your Souls be for ever?

when

when you come to poſſeſs the eternal fruit of your bad bargain, then could any lay their ears to Hell-gates, and liſten at your cries, they would hear ſuch language as this from your trembling lips, *Folly, Folly, Woe, Woe, Eternity, Eternity.*

USE II.

Secondly, This calls to mourning over the great decaies of this Heavenly Trade, in the times and places wherein we live: Loſs of Trade is eaſily reſented as an evil caſe, a matter of trouble. Men uſe to be affected with hard times, when a death lies on their intereſt, and their earthly concerns are at a loſs; and this is the caſe of moſt men this day; all places are full of complaints about their affairs in the world; there's a moth in mens labours and dealings, and it is eaſily ſeen and felt; the heavy looks, and heartleſs carriages of many, do plainly demonſtrate a ſenſe of their temporal waſtes, and their mouths vent ſuch language: *The times are hard, and the trade of the Nation gone:* But alas! where are the mourners of *Sion?* and who is afflicted at the decaies of godlineſs, and death on this Heavenly Trade? Though there is nothing more viſible and lamentable than the falling back in Religion; yet who laies it to heart? and who is rightly affected with this important evill?

Now towards the cure of this inſenſibleneſs, and to awaken our hearts to a due apprehenſiveneſs of our evil caſe, by reaſon of the decaies of godlineſs; I ſhall

1 *Lay*

1 *Lay down some symptomes evidencing it to be our case, that there are real and great decaies of this Heavenly Trade in the time and places wherein we live.*
2 *Shew why this should be for a lamentation.*

First, That this Heavenly Trade goes back and decaies, is so evident, that he is a stranger in our *Israel*, and hath too much of a spirit unconcern'd in these matters, who doth not plainly see Religion, and the power of Godliness dying and languishing in most places and persons.

Now the better to evince this sad truth, I shall proceed in a plain and familiar method, keeping to the Metaphor in the Text, and the usual symptomes of decay'd Trading.

Six things usually shew the decaies of earthly Trading, all which are conclusive of the point in hand, and discover bad times for piety, and great wastes of Religion.

First, When the price of things is much fal'n, and the rates very low, and goods are worth little or nothing; then men say, it's bad trading. So it is now in this Heavenly Trade; the rate and value of divine things is much abated; Wisdom's goods seem little worth to many: There was a time when Heavenly Wares were highly prized: the Word of God was precious to souls, far better to Saints than thousands of gold and silver: they could have parted with all the world, to enjoy God in Ordinances: estate, ease, credit, were nothing to a place in God's house: and one view of his countenance was better than life: Oh how sweet were the words of his

his mouth? much ſweeter than the honey and honey-comb: Men could let their own ploughs ſtand ſtill, to ſet their hands to God's plough; with *Mary*, they could neglect any buſineſs to ſit at Chriſts feet, *Luke* 10. 39. leave their appointed food, and moſt pleaſant delicacies, for one draught of Sanctuary-waters; yea but for one ſip of divine ſweetneſs, they could break their reſt, leave all for Chriſt's company; bear frowns, threatnings, loſſes, ſufferings, with wonderfull eaſe, for ſome fellowſhip with God and his people; they would not loſe a praying or hearing hour, whatever it coſt them; they would ſtick at no hardſhips; price ſhould never break between Chriſt and them; ſubſcribe any terms; and count it a cheap bargain too, if at any rate they might obtain grace, and ſome ſpiritual good to their ſouls. But alas! now the caſe is altered; few will bid much for the precious things of *Sion*; even they that could have plucked out their eyes, and have given them to the Meſſengers of Chriſt, now think it too dear to pluck their hands out of their boſomes to open the door to Chriſt himſelf: Now ſoul-priviledges are worth little or nothing: Sermons, ſociety of Saints are ſcarce counted worth the parting with a little time, eaſe, buſineſs, or friend, to enjoy them. *A ſhop, a market*, is better than the ſolemn meeting with moſt: few can ſtep over a ſtraw, and forbear to gather a little ſtubble, though it be to get the unſearchable treaſure of Chriſt: This is the ſad temper of moſt Profeſſours this day, they have loſt their eſtimation of Chriſt and ſpiritual things;

they

they do not value (let men talk what they will) God, above the world; Christ, above rest; one day in his Courts, above a thousand elsewhere; his precious Word, above their appointed food: most think it more adviseable to take seasons for the world, than for Heaven; rather to baulk many Sermons, than loose a little profit and opportunity, though but of very small advantage in the world: Mn are full, and rich, and have goods enough; they think they know enough already; have heard enough, prayed enough; they feel no want of, nor see worth in spiritual things; and therefore offer so little for soul-advantages; and this bespeaks manifestly the decay of this Heavenly Trade.

Secondly, Fewness of buyers argues bad trading. Among men, when Chapmen are scarce, few take off any goods; wares lie on mens hands and will not off; then men say, Trade is fal'n: Thus it is in this Heavenly Trade, there are few buyers of Wisdom's Wares: choice goods lie on sellers hands, and will not off: may not the Lord Jesus complain as formerly Wisdom did, *Prov.* 1. 24. *I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hands, and no man regarded; you have set at nought all my counsels, and would have none of my reproof.* And as the Servants of God in the parable, *Mat.* 11. 17. *We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned, and ye have not lamented.* Markets are full in many places; the Lord Jesus hath much goods exposed to sale, and there are many Chapmen, but few buyers; persons come to Religious Assemblies and Sermons, as many

do

do to Fairs, to see, and be seen; to gaze on goods, but not to buy; few will take Christ's wares on his own terms, and come up to the selling-price; God, grace and glory, are too dear for many mens money; they like some goods, but the price is too high: some could be content to have Christ; but to deny themselves, take up their Cross, leave all, and follow Christ; that they think is too dear, and break for price, *Mat.* 16. 24. Heaven is desireable at last, but the world at present: they could be content to take Heaven in reversion, when the lease of their worldly interests is expired; and to receive their portion there, when all is gone here: but to trade above now, and transport their earthly treasures to Heaven, while they enjoy them on earth, that's too hard for them; such goods, such overtures will not off; persons will not receive the Word of God as the Word of God: they will not take threatnings to fear them, warnings to regard them, promises to believe them, precepts to obey them. May not most Ministers complain, *Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? Isa.* 53. 1. Most like and commend sermons, but few receive and obey them; it's lamentable to consider how little of a Sermon is carried away, remembred and practised: This is the sin of Professours, and some that pass for more than ordinary, and yet are guilty of this careless, forgetful and unprofitable hearing: persons entertain truths, as they do their acquaintance: when they meet them on the way, shake hands and embrace them: be exceeding glad to

see

see them, and then bid them farewel; that's the reason the Lord Jesus carries back so much goods from Markets; his wares will not off, men buy not: And hence it is also that Christ turns back their duties; he will not receive the goods of such neither, and this makes bad trading for Heaven.

Thirdly, Want of employment is a sign of bad trading: When Trade is good, every man's hand is full of work; but when men are out of employment, and have nothing to set their hand to, but stand idle in the Market-place, this shews a decay of Trade: And is it not so with Wisdom's Labourers now? Persons professing God, were once active in Religion, but are now grown slothful in spiritual business. Where are the works of faith, the labours of love, the fruits of the spirit among Christians this day? who is fervent in spirit? *Ephes.* 6. 18. who strives in prayer, watching thereunto with all perseverance? *Joh.* 6. 27. where are they that labour even unto weariness for the bread that endures? *Heb.* 12. 1. running even unto fainting in the race that is set before them? *Rev.* 7. 15. Serving God day and night in his Temple, and being diligent that they may be found of him in peace, 2 *Pet.* 3. 14. What *Pharoah* charged on the *Hebrews*, when attempting liberty to serve God, may be with much more Justice reflected on those that profess to serve God; and though they may, yet do not: *Ye are Idle, ye are Idle*. and hence it is mens hearts go a whoring after the world, and the flesh, with the lusts thereof; it is because they are slothful in

ſpirit; a death is upon their hearts, and this cauſeth the work of God to ceaſe, *Neh.* 4. 11. It is but little work moſt do for God this day; how cold, dead, formal, ſlighty, are many in duty, doing the work of God deceitfully, their own conſciences being Judges? *Jer.* 48. 10. few labour with their hearts before they come to hear, in hearing, and after hearing, to get ſome ſoul-good by it: Men are uſually pleaſed with a Lamb, though there be no oyl in it; cannot be contented without ſome duty, but well pleaſed with bare duty: To be nothing in Religion troubles them; but to be ſomething, though never ſo little, ſatisfieth them: and if this be Popery to reſt in the work done, how many Papiſts have we amongſt us this day? Certainly Profeſſors are generally aſleep, or ſlumbering; they do their work ſo badly and heartleſly, their work falls out of their hand, as things do from men aſleep; active for the world, as if they could never do enough; but ſoon tyr'd in the work of God; diſpatch but little of heavenly work from day to day, from one Sabbath to another; little heart-ſearching, ſoul-watching work is done; little in-door employment is carried on; the exerciſe of Faith, Hope, humility, patience, zeal, ſelf-denial, ſeems a ſtranger to a great many this day; not for want of occaſions or encouragements to work, (the Lord is ſtill calling upon his Labourers to make haſte) but for want of hearts to work, And this ſpiritual ſloth proves that the Heavenly Trade is much loſt.

Fourthly, The poverty of Traders plainly ſhews

ſhews Trading is not good; when a Trade doth not maintain the Trader, but he ſtill goes back, and becomes poorer, then ſurely trading is not good: *The diligent hand makes rich, Prov.* 10. 4. When trading is good, Traders uſually thrive, and live well upon it; but when they waſte and become poor then trading decaies: So is it with Heavenly Traders, when they drive a good Trade for Heaven they grow rich apace towards God, and in their own Souls: Wiſdom's wares are ſoul-enriching wares; *My fruit is better than gold, yea than fine gold, and my revenue than choice ſilver, Prov.* 8. 19. Men account thoſe to be rich who have much of gold and ſilver; but Wiſdom's fruit is better than gold and therefore muſt needs be enriching: they that have this gold cannot be poor: Hence it is Chriſt counſels *Laodicea* to buy of him gold tryed in the fire, that ſhe might be rich, *Rev.* 3. 1. But alas how poor in ſpirituals are perſons generally this day! *Therefore I ſaid, Surely theſe are poor, they are fooliſh, for they know not the way of the Lord, nor the judgment of their God, Jer.* 5. 4. Unacquaintedneſs with the way of God, when men walk wide from Religion, and loſe their ſtrict and cloſe walking with God, they ſoon become poor and fooliſh: And this is the caſe of many every where; they give a carnal liberty to themſelves, and indulge a freedom to walk after the ſight of their own eyes, and not by rule; and where this is, there is ſoul-poverty, which is too viſible in moſt this day. Chriſtians, do but obſerve your own hearts and others, and you will find this ſpiritual poverty

abounding every where. Little thrivings appear under the best of means, choicest Priviledges do little more than keep up a name to live; they convey but little quickenings to the soul: A shew of Religion, and a meer skeleton of profession, is the common fruit of Ordinances in most places, whereas all the while decaies are on the vitals of Christianity; abatements in grace appear every day, and a visible alteration in the whole frame, and internal vigour of the soul, faith, love, humility, patience, self-denyal, and every grace becomes weaker every day; *Former dayes are better then now, Eccles.* 7. 10. Speak Christian, are not matters worse with thy soul, than they were? and abatements appear in every part.

There was a time when thy mind was beam'd over with Divine Light; the Candle of the Lord did shine in thy tabernacle: Thy eye was quick to discern good and evil; thou couldest once see an excellencey in the knowledge of Christ; O how choice were sermons! priviledges were to thee the uncasking of Jewels, and the opening of hidden glory; thou did'st dwell in the Land of Visions, and still some new discoveries of light and grace did meet thee in thy affectionate attendance upon God. But now it is not so; thy Candle burns dimly, and thy right eye is darkened; now thou seest but little beauty in grace, or desireableness in truth: things under thy feet th' other day, that seem'd nothing compar'd with Christ; now through the multiplying-glass of thy deceived mind, seem great and lovely.

Formerly

Formerly thy affections were warm and lively after God, his word and ways: O! how precious were his appointed Feasts and his Tabernacles amiable? thou couldst delight in approaching to God, and talk of a blessedness in his presence. O the pleasure, sweetness and joy thy heart did find in thy Closet, in spiritual Converses, and Duties, and publick Ordinances? thou couldst weep over sin, and bedew thy prayers with tears, and find thy heart burn within thee while Christ was speaking, and melted under the warm beams of divine love. But, alas, now it is not so; now thy affections are dead, thy hart as cold as a stone; all the while thou art speaking to God in Prayer, or God speaking to thee in his Word, thou findest no more savour in Ordinances, Duties, and Christian Converses, than in the white of an Egg, *Job.* 6. 16. Thou findest not that delight in God as formerly, and the night of thy pleasure is turned to fear unto thee, *Isa.* 21. 4. This is Soul-poverty.

Again, there was a time also, when thy Will, like the great Wheel in the Clock, could move regularly after God; thou couldst choose God for thy chiefest interest, and Christ for thy only treasure; preferring an interest in him above ten thousand Worlds: thou couldst have voted for communion with God, before thy meat and drink; and one hours fellowship with Christ, beyond all the delights on Earth: thou couldst choose the things that please God, and deny thy own pleasure to give content to him: thou couldst once stick to thy first choice, and find

the purpose of thy heart cleaving to God, *Act.* 11. 23. Thou couldst once resolve, and keep thy resolutions; 'twas easier to take thy heart out of thy body, than to gain thy consent to part with Christ, his presence and ways. But now thy will is hardly drawn after pure and constant enjoyments of God in his ways: O! how difficult a thing is to perswade thy will to let go all for Christ, to leave every thing to attend on God, to part with the world and self to wait on God, to throw all over-board to take in Christ! How hard is it now, to consent that Christ shall have all the command of thy Soul, and dispose of thy dearest interests! now thou findest it a work above thee, to keep thy heart in order one hour, or to perform the purposes of thy Soul to God and Godliness; thou resolvest, and changest every day; thou vowest, and breakest thy vows continually; there is no stedfastness in thy spirit: this also bespeaks thy Soul-poverty.

There was a time also when thy Conscience was tender, thy heart could smite the for the least sin; thy Conscience could hold thee to the greatest duty, and bind thee to thy good behaviour: thou could'st not go against the light and checks of thy regulated Conscience, were it to gain the whole World. But now 'tis dead and quiet, it can bear the sharpest strokes of the two-edged Sword, and not feel it, or bleed; it makes little or no bones of sin against knowledge and mercy; sins that were before troublesome, now go down easily; it can digest threatnings and terrors with little trouble,

trouble, and sleep while the arrows of the Lord's wrath flie about its ears; it can let go mercies without regarding, and truths to pass away without entertainment: this is Soul-poverty,

This thou can'st say too, there was formerly an activity in thy Soul for God, and the spring of thy heart was strong, and it set every whee a going: thou couldst run, and not be weary; walk, and not be faint: no religious duty was tiresome to thee; no commands of God were grievous, 1 *Joh.* 5. 3. no journeys seem'd long that led to God, nor Sermons tedious that spake of God: thy spirit was all life, when in holy company, and work: did any say, Come, let us go up to the mountain of the house of the Lord, *Zach.* 8. 21. thou wouldst say, I will go also: If God did but say, Seek thou my face, *Psal.* 27. 8. thy heart would presently answers thy face, Lord, will I seek. But now a deadness seizeth upon thee, and slothfulness gathers in over thy whole Soul: thou art soon weary of well-doing, and canst not hold out with God in conflicts and difficulties, as heretofore: thou art not so diligent to prepare thy meat in Summer, *Prov.* 30. 25. nor to lay in provision for a Winter spending-season: thou turnest on thy bed as a door on its inches, and takest little pains with thy hart and conversation: thou losest many an opportunity and advantage for thy Soul, through thy deadness and indisposition to good works: And doth not this bespeak Soul-languishing, and poverty?

There are decays and poverty in thy life also, as well as ſpirit: how unprofitable is now thy converſation, to what it was? there was a time when thy bow did abide in ſtrength, thy lips did diſperſe knowledge, *Prov.* 15.7. thy ſteps did drop fatneſs: it was good to be in thy company, few came from thee but were better'd.

But, alas! now, how dwindling is thy light? how jejune and ſapleſs is thy converſe? thy company little lovely, thy communications little profitable; thy words eat as doth a Canker, it ſears as a hot Iron, and deadens thoſe that hear it; thy breath freezes all that come near it, ſo unprofitable a burden is thy company. *We turn all Religion* (faith one) *into a diſcourſe, cenſure or diſpute: We can eat, and drink, and talk, and ſin as freely.* This is a ſad caſe indeed, and beſpeaks great decays of godlineſs, when perſons become more poor, and impotent in their Souls.

Mr. Sedgwick's *Chriſt's counſel to his languiſhing Church.*

Fifthly, Small adventures in Traders, to uſually beſpeak bad Trading: when times are hard, and Goods go not off, Sellers buy but little and drive a leſs Trade when improvements fail; men are loath to adventure the principal, but preſently contract their Trade, and leſſen their dealings. So 'tis in this ſpiritual Trade, when Souls begin to decay in it, and Trading is bad, they narrow up their Trade, and lay out leſs of their heart and ſtrength about it; little of their Soul goes out after God, and things above; they cannot adventure for God, as formerly, nor ſpare time for prayer, hearing, reading, holy conference,

ference, as once they could; the stream of their affections begins to run another way: now they are all for the world, self, and vanity: business and interest eats up all their time: or at least, they say to Christ, as *David* did to *Mephibosheth*, (*Thou and* Zibah *divide the land:*) So, thou and the world, thou and pleasures, thou and reputation divide my heart, time and strength: this is too evident; God hath not so much of mens hearts, desires, love, delight faith, hope, zeal, as heretofore; 'tis low waters all the year long with many: no heart to duty, as the Prophet complains: *Whoredom and Wine take away the heart, Hos.* 4. 11. So lust, sloth, the world, and self, take away the heart: few breathings after God, when absent: or delight, when present: indisposed to duty, cold, formal in duty: put off God with any thing: keep the best of the flock the prime of their strength for themselves and the world: and turn off the Lord with a corrupt thing, the residue of their wasted affections and strength, *Mal.* 1. 14.

Sixthly, Breaking shews bad Trading, when men can hold it no longer, but are forc'd to give over: they go back, and waste so fast, that at last they shut up shop, and are gone. The times we live in are a manifest instance of this truth: men breaking ever and anon, now one, then another: declares plainly Trading is bad. And thus 'tis with Wisdom's Marchants this day: how many that have driven a brave trade of Profession, made a great shew of Religion, were famous in their generation for Parts, and seem-

seeming Piety; but are now come to nothing, quite fallen and gone; great Apostasies from the truth, said Shipwracks of Faith and Conscience can these late times speak of! Men that seem'd like Stars, to give a blaze for a while, and then turn'd to falling Meteors at last: or, with the Sun, that riseth in a splendor, and sets in a cloud: The visible apostacy, and gross debauchery of men professing God in these latter times, is great; but the secret degeneracy and backslidings of heart, are much more: many break, but more do warp. 'Tis far easier to observe, than to be affected with mens great declensions in Religion; some in principal, but most in practice; some with the fallen Angels have left their habitation, and fallen from their first state; others faulter in their profession, and are fallen in their station: some with stormy winds are shaken down; others fully ripe, and gotten to the height of their profession, loosen by degrees, and drop away: some fall from the tree, others root where they hang; some trees have lost their fruit, others their very leaves, and are become twice dead: where can you cast your eye, and not see fallings away either from Faith, or faithfulness? Men take up notions, and as easily leave them; most build upon the sand, little rootings in the truth: how easy is it to draw men from their opinions? little stedfastness in love: how soon doth the labours thereof cease? a little trouble makes men let go their profession, others lose their strictness in Religion, and grow more remiss and lame in duty, leaving their first love, and close

cloſe walks with Gods: And are not theſe ſuch manifeſt ſymptomes of decaying godlineſs, that he who runs may read, and ſee that the Heavenly Trade is almoſt come to nothing this day?

2 And this is cauſe of mourning and to be greatly laid to heart; who can ſee theſe things and not be affected: If there be any quick fleſh, how can it but bleed? if any waters are left, ſurely our eyes ſhould run down tears, and we pour out waters in *Miſpah* before the Lord abundantly, for waſting, gaſping piety, that is even giving up the ghoſt: For where this Heavenly Trade decaies,

Firſt; There is a growing ſtrangeneſs between God and ſuch ſouls: While Trade is kept up among men, there is much acquaintance, converſe and intimacy between them; there are ever and anon occaſions of writings, meetings and diſcourſes while trading holds; but when once that is let down, then communion ceaſeth; they have little buſineſs one to another; no more letters paſs, or viſits given; ſeldome ſee one another, and ſo at laſt grow out of acquaintance with each other: And thus 'tis between God and ſouls; when once this Heavenly Trade is let down, a ſtrangeneſs begins between God and them, they are ſeldomer in his company; neither are there ſuch inquiries after God as before: *There is none that calleth upon thy Name, that ſtirreth up himſelf to take hold of thee: for thou haſt hid thy face from us, and haſt conſumed us becauſe of our iniquities, Iſa.* 64. 7. They were ſtrange to God, they did not call upon him as they

they uſe to do; and if they did, it was in ſuch a general, cold way, that it ſignified little; they did not take hold of him: The word ſignifieth, *To* (*a*) *hold with all thy ſtrength*, as men do that are drowning that will not let go what they hold: it ſignifies alſo (*ſaies a Learned Critick*) not onely to hold a thing, but faſter and faſter to wax ſtrong in the holding it: But alas! they did not ſo take hold of God, as ſuch who were like to periſh without him: They did not ſtir up themſelves: They did not waken and rouze up (*b*) themſelves: (as the word imports) They were grown more remiſs in duty; they did not ſtrive with God for help as they did: And God was ſtrange to them; he hid his face from them; he concealed himſelf, that he might not be ſeen, (as the word ſignifies) he ſeems not to care for their company. This made the Prophet cry out, *Why ſhouldeſt thou be as a ſtranger in the Land, and as a wayfaring man, who turneth aſide to tarry but for a night? Jer.* 14. 18. Seldome viſits, and ſhort ſtayes, ſhews ſtrangeneſs in them that that have been intimate; and ſo 'tis between God and ſuch who neglect this Heavenly Trade; the Lord ſeldome viſits them, nor hath ſuch warm converſes with them as before: And is not this cauſe of mourning, when ſuch a friend as God hath been to his people, and one on whom all their hope lies, and in whom all their help is, ſhall look ſtrange upon them, and take no notice of them? This is enough to break an ingenuous heart, and one that knows what it is

(*a*) להחזיק, *Apprehendere retinere.* (*b*) מתעורר, *Evigilare vel excitare ſeipſum occultum, ut ne videatur.*

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to enjoy God: Neither is it onely the present want of God is their suffering; but by this means they are in danger of losing him quite: *The Lord is with you while you are with him; and if you seek him, he will be found of you; but if you forsake him he will forsake you*, 2 *Chron.* 15. 2. Hence the Prophet, when he apprehended a Change in God's carriage towards *Israel*, the next thing he fears, is his departure from them; he no sooner complains of God's strangeness, but presently praies, *Leave us not*, *Jer.* 14. 9. When once it came to a straitning, and loathing between God and his people, then terrible judgments follow; *My soul loathed them and their soul abhorred me*, *Zach.* 11. 8, 9. 'Tis in the Original, My soul was straitened in them: God's heart was not towards them as formerly: he could not bear with them as formerly: And then, *I will not feed them, that that dies, let it die, and that that is to be cut off, let it be cut off*; he matters not what becomes of them, Do but think in what a case are such a people: This should be for a lamentation.

Secondly, Soul-poverty and wastings of their spiritual interests, do usually attend neglect of this Heavenly Trading. When men come to spend upon the stock, and have no comings in, they must needs waste apace: So it is where trading for Heaven is neglected; such have no recruits of their wasted graces, nor supplies of their impoverished souls, when the fountain is shut up, and all communication of grace withheld; no entercourse between God and them; he will not receive their goods, nor impart his trea-

treasure, but all waies of relief are blocked up; then they must needs waste apace in spirituals, and become poorer every day. The way to be rich, is to have store of Christ's tryed gold: *I counsil thee to buy of me gold tryed in the fire, that thou mayest be rich, Rev.* 3. 18. *Laodicea* was poor, because she wanted Christ's tryed gold, the real graces of his Spirit; and this she lost by letting down her Spiritual Trade; she did not buy of Christ; she did not come to, and deal with Christ in his own waies, and upon his own terms, and that made her poor: And so 'tis with every Soul that neglects this Heavenly Trade; he soon comes to know what soul-wants are: Once let down a life in godliness, and presently poor in graces, poor in experiences, poor in comforts, poor in hopes, want strength, and want peace, fare hard, lodge badly, cast out from among men; as *Job* describes poor and mean persons: *Who cut up mallows by the bushes, and Juniper roots for their meat, Job.* 30. 4, 5, 6. Very mean fare; little pleasing or nourishing food; bitter and salt herbs: some take them for nettles, poor food; and yet the usual feeding in those parts, of those that were low in the world; neither was their lodging better: *They dwelt in the Clefts of the Valley, in caves of the Earth, and in the Rocks:* Suitable also was their reputation; *They were driven from among men, they cried after them, as after a thief.* Such is the condition of poor persons full of straights, and meanly esteemed: and so 'tis with such as decay in their Heavenly Trade: they have lost

Herbas amaras & salsas. Merc.

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their ſweet morſels, and marrowy bits: their pleaſant fare, and ſoul-refreſhments they once had, and feed on dry bones, and ſapleſs Ordinances: They are not maintain'd at that rate of comfort and experience they once had: They have hard lodging alſo: loſe that ſweet reſt and peace they ſometimes found in Chriſt, and in their ſincere walkings after him: Fal'n in reputation too: neither God, nor good men think ſo well of them as once they did. This is the caſe of ſuch as fall back in Religion: they ſoo fall into ſuch poverty, and ſpiritual wants come upon them, as armed men: *In the fulneſs of their ſufficiency they are in ſtraits, Prov.* 24. 34. *Job* 20. 22. And this is cauſe of mourning: wants and poverty do fill men with trouble, perplexity and grief: Oh the diſtractions and diſtreſſing thoughts that ſtraits commonly beget! and no ſtraits like to ſoul-ſtraits: Chriſtians, you your ſelves being Judges.

Thirdly, Neglect of Trading for Heaven will blaſt all other Trading, and breed a moth to conſume even you temporal ſubſtance: When *Iſrael* began to let down their Heavenly Trade and to mind their own concerns and houſes above God's, preſently God blaſts their temporal intereſts: he makes holes in their money-bags, and blows upon their encreaſe: All their tuggings in the world (with neglect of God and his Worſhip) came to nothing: they ſowed much, and it brought in little: looked for much, and it came to little: wrought hard, earned great wages, laid up money, but it fell out again, through ſome ſecret hole in their bags, which

which divine jealousie opened, consuming their substance, to let them know that men may make more haste than good speed; and they that reckon without God, must reckon twice. And may not this be one thing that cuts this Nation short in their outward interest this day, because they have forsaken God, neglected his service, lost the power of godliness? certainly though outward prosperity be no token of Gods' favour, nor any Gospel-promise to his people; yet when the Lord does fight against people by successive rebukes, and sent in a secret mildew, wasting and consumption on their interests, and this becomes general and national, it shews displeasure in God, and should be laid to heart, the want of which is set forth as an additional aggravation to such a peoples sin: *Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? did not he against whom we have sinned? for they would not walk in his waies, neither were they obedient unto his Laws: Therefore he poured upon him the fury of his anger, and the strength of battle, and hath set him on fire round about, yet he knew not, and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart*, Isa. 42. 24. 25. It was the not walking in the way of God, neglect of obedience and practical holiness, a letting down the heavenly Trade that brought those ruining judgments on *Israel*, losses on their interests, *vers.* 21. They were robbed and spoiled, firing their houses, *vers.* 25. *It hath set him on fire round, it burned him.* Now in this miserable case there was yet a greater judgement on them, a strange stupefaction and insensiblenes of spirit; they did not see God's

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anger in it, yet, *Yet he knew it not* (*viz.*) Whence it came, and who did all this; they looked to *Caldeans*, and enemies, but 'twas God did it; and yet they laid it not to heart; they were not rightly affected with all these desolations, and their near approach to ruine: And is not this our case? God hath warned us by his Word this many years, threatned us by prodigious signs in Heaven and Earth, begun to execute them already, by Plague, Sword and Fire, dreadful wastes in the great City, and many other places, to the undoing of many families, made a breach upon the Trade of the Nation, to the impoverishing of the whole Land; and yet we are as insensible as *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians* were, as if the Lord had sent the spirit of slumber upon us; impoverished, yet feel it not: This should be for a lamentation.

Fourthly, The decay of this Heavenly Trade, if not cured, is the ready and certain way to ruine: *The destruction of the poor is poverty, Prov.* 10. 15. Mens poverty fills them with consternation and dejecting fears, and does also expose them to many evils, and take down their external defence from injuries, being made a prey to their oppressors, *The rich man's wealth is his strong City, Prov.* 18. 11. Rich men protect themselves from injuries: their riches are Advocates for them to men: but poor men lye open to all invasions: when men grow poor every man treads upon them: So is it when the Heavenly Trade decays, and soul-poverty springs out of its ruine, then destruction makes haste to such places and persons: For this the Lord

Jesus threatens to take the Kingdom from a people, because they bring not forth the fruit of it, *Matth.* 24. 43. they did not render to God the fruit of all his dressings and waitings on them: Barrenness and decays in Religion uncured, are a certain forerunner of Delolation, *Luke.* 13. 7. 9.

Before the Lord brought in that cruel Nation, the *Vandals* on *Africa*; the Christians in *Spain* were much degenerated from their former purity (as *Salvian* complains) and the power of godliness was much decayed; he tells us, they had nothing left but the name of Christianity, to which their conversation was most unlike. (a) *What is it* (saith he) *to please our selves with the name of Christian, when the very name does greaten our guilt, in that we are so unlike to it?* Before the Massacre at Paris (saith Mr. Clark in his Martyrol.) *such a general stupidity seized upon the Protestants, that their minds were very wavering, and few there were that shewed themselves zealously bent to Religion; but all, both great and small, were intent upon worldly matters, building to themselves goodly Castles in the air.* It was observed by some, that before the change of Religion and Martyrdom in Queen *Mary*'s daies, there was great unprofitableness under the Means of Grace. What the issues of these great decaies in Religion may be amongst us, we know not; but such symptomes have usually foregone

(a) *Quid est in quo nobis de Christiano nomine blandimur? Cum unique hoc ipso magis per omnem sacratissimum rei simus qui a sancto nomine discrepamus.* Salvi. de Gubern. lib. 3. pag. 85.

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great changes, and severe strokes, on such persons and places: And is not this matter of lamentation? Physitians use to cure a Lethargy by a Fever; the one hath been our disease, O that the other, if no means else will do, may be our cure.

Fifthly, At the best decaies in this Heavenly Trade will render the Traders account heavy in the day of Christ. Into what streits did the sense of an abused trust put the Prodigal Steward, *Luke* 16. 13? He had been unfaithful in his place, wasted his Masters goods, and now was in danger of being turned out; a reckoning was call'd for, and he unable to render it; and in perplexing thoughts how to give in his accounts, and to secure his future welfare. And this will be the case of such as are negligent and unfaithful in their Heavenly Trade; it will expose them to soul-trouble one day, how to answer it before God: First or last God will call for an account how his goods have been improved: He hath given you a stock to trade upon for him, Light, Grace, Parts, Capacities, Gospel-privileges and Opportunities, Liberty, Peace, Experiences, with many mercies and afflictions, which are all your Lord's goods, and must be accounted for; upon the passing of which depends your eternal state, or much of your soul's peace: The Lord Jesus hath a double audit, or accounting with his servants: In this life in the Court of Conscience, and in the Judgment-Day at the bar of God: In the first your present peace and soul-comfort is much concerned, and your eternal welfare in the last:

Alas! how will you answer conscience now when that book is opened, and the Lord Jesus brings in his bill of so many mercies expended, with skill and capacity to improve them; and such a charge of debt issuing thence: So much due for such goods, and for other wares; for Sermons, Sacraments, Graces, Comforts, Frames, Prayer Returns, Gracious Providences and Protections; so many personal mercies, so many family mercies, so many bodily mercies, so many soul mercies, so many Church mercies, so many National mercies, sick-bed mercies, health mercies, journey mercies, habitation mercies, caring mercies, sparing mercies, giving mercies, forgiving mercies, seen mercies, unseen mercies, and little or no return yet made for all these. How can the conscience stand up under such a charge, or lift up his face without spot when it sees no guile in all, and cannot answer one of a thousand? *How shall man be just with God, if he contend with him? How shall he answer him one of a thousand?* And if you cannot carry it in the Court of Conscience here, where God reckons by a Proxy; and it may be doth give but a general charge, what will you do at the bar of God, where the Lord will judge righteous judgment, and determine your eternal state, as you are approved or disapproved in that day? What think you souls, will not so much neglect of duty? such decaies of grace? so frequent breach of Covenants? so great unfaithfulness in your places and relations? so many daies and weeks, and not a stroke of work for God? so much bad work, so much waste of goods; will not all this look

look wistly upon you, and without repentance and sealed acquittance, render your case dangerous at the judgment seat? And if so is it not matter of lamentation? O lay this to heart!

USE III.

Thirdly, If the Heavenly Trade be the best Trade; then this reproves mens too greedy and inordinate pursuit of their earthly Trades and Interests, to the great prejudice and hinderance of this Heavenly Trade: And oh that I could here dip my Pen in tears, as well as gall; and not onely write against, but weep over this earthly spiritedness, the great, the common, the uncur'd disease of men; almost of all men, of good men, this day! With that earnestness, strength of affection, and indefatigable labours, do men pursue after the things of this world, as if all their pleasure, happiness, yea life and eternal welfare lay wrapt up in these things. *Jehu* did not more furiously drive after a Crown, then men do this day after crumbs. There was a time to some when godliness was counted gain; but now gain is valued beyond godliness. *Trade* is the great *Diana* to which most men sacrifice: *Profit* the wheel within the wheel, which sets all agoing: The salt that seasons all things; nothing savours well that hath not this in it. *Advantage in the world*, is like the blood in mens veins; the soul in the body; that quickens their desires, puts life into their dead hopes; makes the blind to see, the lame to leap and run, the deaf to hear, the lips of them that are asleep to speak. *Gain*

is the whetstone to mens wits, the loadstone to their affections, the spur to their actions: this is the object of mens quickest senses, the center of their liveliest motions. O! the projects, cares, tuggings, sweats, rowings, ridings, restless labours, that are engag'd about this enquiry: *Who will shew us any good.*

Quest. *But how may we know when men do inordinately pursue their earthly business and concern?*

Answ. 1. First, When they ingross too much of their time: this was *Israel's* sin, saying, *When will the New-Moon be gone, that we may sell Corn? and the Sabbath, that we may set forth Wheat? Amos.* 8. 5. They were not contented with their own time, but they must entrench on God's time also; they thought the time long till they were at their worldly work, and hoped to get advantage from God's institutions, for their earthly interests; and that the Jubilee-Sabbath, when men must cease from tillage, would help to heighten the price of things, and so further their advantage: therefore the Lord reproves them for their undue diligence about the World: (*a*) *It is in vain for you to rise up early, and to sit up late to eat the bread of sorrows; for so he giveth his beloved sleep, Psal.* 127. *Here* (saith *Piscator*) *he doth, by this sudden Apostrophe, inveigh against those covetous Tradesmen and Merchants, telling them*; (*b*) *'Tis in vain for*

(*a*) *Frustra illos nunc ob vile lucellum expergisci ad opus, &c.* (*b*) *Artificis qui diluculo ad labores evigilant.* Rab. Solo.

them

them to rise up so early to their work, and sit up so late in their shops, for such poor and contemptible gain: So *Rabbi Solomon* renders it for *Artificers, who rise early to their labours*. Excessive pursuits of the World in point of time are here reprov'd as vain and sinful, while hereby they deprive themselves of time for God and their Souls.

Secondly, when they lay out their Hearts on the World; *If riches encrease, set not your hearts on them*, *Psal.* 62. 10. The danger of a disease lies in its seisure on the heart: Earthly things, under the hand are a duty; but in the heart, a disease. The heart is Christ's Royal Fort, to which the Devil, the World and Flesh lay siege, and if that be taken, all is gone: Earthly things are briars and thorns, and therefore dangerous to come near the heart: the least prick at the heart is mortal; the heart is Christ's nuptial-bed, into which Christ retires; the World is the Saint's servant; now to admit a servant into the Lord's bed, is adulterous: the heart is God's Seat, Pavilion and Throne, into which none must come but himself; like the gates of the Sanctuary, into which none must enter but God himself: *This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter into it; because the Lord, the God of* Israel *hath entred into it; therefore it shall be shut*, *Ezek.* 44. 2. Such is the heart of Believers, to be kept for God only; to take in creatures into God's room, is intolerable boldness; to let out thy heart to the World, Trade, Interest, Creatures, is to invert the order of nature, as well as

grace. In creation, God sets man uppermost, and puts all things under his feet: *thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thine hands; thou hast put all things under his feet*, Psal. 8. 6. Now, to place those things over thy heart, which God hath set under thy feet, is to turn the World upside down, and to overturn the whole course of nature. This is the great sin of this day, mens letting out their hearts on the things of this World: were persons but serious, and willing to be search'd, and to know their own state, many that think well of themselves, might find, that notwithstanding all their shews, and seeming hopes, they are in a woful and dangerous case, in that their hearts are not right with God, but are set on other things, on earthly things more than on God.

Six things discover this, that the heart is set too much upon this World.

First, When the desires are inordinately let out after it: this is one symptom the Prophet gives of an unsound, covetous heart; such a one hath greedy, unsatisfied desires after the World; *Who enlargeth his desire as Hell, and is as Death, and cannot be satisfied*, Hab. 2. 5. In the former verse he tells us, a carnal unbelieving heart, is a rotten unsound heart: *His soul which is lifted up, is not upright in him: but the just shall live by Faith.* A carnal heart is all for himself, and his own carnal interest, and not for God; he lives by sight, and not by Faith; and this was an evidence of it, all his desires were

were for carnal things. Desires are the breathings and outgoings of the heart, and as the heart is, such are they; where the desires are earthly, the heart is earthly; such a one is never satisfied with any portion of earthly things: as a person in a Fever, is always thirsty, so is an earthly heart, always coveting more and more: *They joyn house to house, and lay field to field, till there be no place. Isa.* 5. 8. As long as there is any place left, they covet it: A Field, a House, a Living, is but a morsel that stays a hungry stomach for the present, as soon as that is digested they long for more: this is a certain sign that heart is on the World, whose desires have never enough of it: and alas! where's the person that will say with *Jacob, I have enough?* Where the heart is set on God and things above, a little of the World will content that Soul; food and rayment, with godliness, is enough; but it is never satisfied with its measure of Grace, and enjoyment of God; the more it enjoys of God, the more it longs for further fellowship with him; one duty doth but edge the stomach for another: the more he hath, the more he desires of God and spiritual things, and so 'tis with a heart that is altogether earthly, the desires are earthly also, never satisfied with what he hath, but still longing for more.

Secondly, A worldly heart hath worldly thoughts; there the mind is wholly taken up about earthly things; thoughts are to the heart as the beams are to the Sun, the streams to the Fountain, which are homogeneous, of the same

nature

nature with them; our Lord Jesus tells us, that 'tis out of the heart that evil thoughts proceed, *Mark.* 7. 21. *They come immediately from the heart*, (says Mr. *Fenner*,) *nothing comes between the heart and them; other sins* (says he) *come from the heart, but it is at the second, third and fourth hand; but thoughts come immediately from it:* And nothing doth more discover the heart, than the usual, habitual, delightful thoughts of a man do: *They are the univocal acts of the heart, which shew what the heart is, as shining does the light*; Mr. *Fenner* of the misery of earthly thoughts. Where are thy thoughts mostly? thy pleasing and delightful thoughts? there is thy Heart: *They that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh, Rom.* 8. 5. As soon as they awake, thoughts of their business (as friends) come to visit them; they drive out other thoughts of God and heavenly things, they vanish and disappear at the presence of earthly thoughts, as Clouds do at the rising-Sun; as when a Master comes in to take his seat, Servants rise up, and go their way: no sooner doth thoughts of God come in, but earthly thoughts drive them away, as the Shepherds did *Jethro*'s Daughters, and there is no *Moses* to stand up and help them, *Exod.* 2. 16, 17. An earthly man from morning to night his thoughts are upon the World, as the Dog follow his Master all the day long: In company, alone, at home, abroad, in journeys, in duties; his thoughts are usually about his Trade, Interest, House, Field, work and the like; it may be sometimes good thoughts may be cast into

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the mind, and these make amends for all other thoughts, feeding the deceived heart with conceits that all is well, because good thoughts come in now and then; whereas the main bent of their thoughts have been about earthly things: these thoughts grow out of the heart, they are in-dwellers; but good thoughts are only guests and strangers that don't stay long; they give a visit, and then are gone, and must give way to earthly thoughts again, which are home-born, houshould-servants and inhabitants: thy thoughts of God are but occasional, now and then extraordinary, when some special mercy or affliction is upon thee, but thy earthly thoughts are fixed, stated and continued: thy good thoughts are like rain-water, that fall upon thee, or as pump-water that must be drawn out; but thy carnal thoughts are as well-water, that runs freely, and springs up from within thee: thy good thoughts are but thy recreation, when thy mind is tired with other things; but thy earthly thoughts are thy work and employment: when men have done their work, they sometimes walk abroad: such are they seldom thought of God and divine things, when thou hast drug'd away the strength of thy mind on the World, and thy own things, then, to quiet conscience, and recreate thy mind, thou giveſt thy thoughts leave to walk abroad, and give a visit to better things: thy heavenly thoughts are gentle, easy, weak and sickly, and carry out little of the strength and vigour of thy heart with them: but thy thoughts of the World are strong and lively,

the first-born and strength of thy heart; they are spending thoughts, working, plotting, carking, studying thoughts: Ah souls! deceive not your selves with fancies of your good estate from some fits and good moods in you (which hypocrites may have) and all the while the strength and bent of your hearts, the constant, lively, prevailing thoughts of your souls are carnal, selfish and earthly.

Thirdly, Persons restless labours after the world, plainly shew their hearts are upon it. Where the heart is set upon a thing, the person is restless till he hath it; he leaves no stone unturned; sets wit, hands, friends, and all on work to get it. When *Shechem*'s heart was set on *Dinah*, *Jacob*'s daughter, he sticks at no proposals so he might but obtain her: *Let me find grace in your eyes, and what ye shall say to me, I will give; the Land shall be before you, dwell and trade therein, and get you possession therein*, Gen. 34. 10, 11. No terms were counted too hard; take up profession, undergo painful duties, punishing, circumcision; part with any thing so he might but have the desire of his heart. What hardships did *Jacob* undergo for his beloved *Rachel*? twice seven years service, consumed with drought in the day, and frost in the night, and his sleep departed from his eyes: *Thou have I been twenty years in thy house; I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattel, and thou hast changed my wages ten times*, Gen. 31. 40, 41. And yet all this he could bear to enjoy the object of his love.

So

So 'tis with earthly minded men; all their capacities are engaged about earthly things: their chiefest strength is laid out about their Trades, callings and business in the world, seldom minding soul-concerns, little imployed in religious duties: now and then hear, read, pray, as may stand with interest: cold, sleighty, formal, sleepy in duty: but all life when about the world: ready to complain prayer is too long, preaching tedious: too much time spent in duty: what need this waste? *Matth.* 26. 8. All seems lost to flesh and blood which is spent on Christ and his service, [Mr. *Trap.*] But all too little for the world: weary themselves for every vanity: stick at nothing that will help them to their desired interests: undergo any hardships: turn the back on any duties: adventure health, reputation, the displeasure of God, with all their spiritual mercies; yea and the eternal welfare of their souls also, rather than lose an advantage in the world: This is the Spirit of too many this day: Men that seem to be somewhat, bid fair for Salvation, with the young man in the Gospel: like the terms well: come up to every thing but this: cannot part with the world for Christ: come up to every thing, only with *Naaman*, must be pardoned in this, that they have a *Rimmon* to bow to, 2 *Kings* 5. 18. In every thing else they will consent to follow Christ, but in this they must be spared: when their farms, their merchandise and profit calls for them, then the concerns of Christ and their souls must stand by; and affections like a flood run over all that lies in their way; take no notice

tice what Scripture or Conscience say: deaf to all arguments that thwart interest: This is the case of a worldly heart: his chiefest strength is laid out about earthly things: these must be followed and sought after, whatever becomes of the soul and spiritual things. What is that so great hope (saith *Seneca*) what so great necessity, that stoops man who was made upright, to contemplate Heaven, and buries and drowns him in the deeps of the Earth, to get out that gold which is not got with less danger than 'tis kept, *Sen.*? A little strength for duty will serve the turn; but a great deal of time, care and labour must the world have: Surely the world rules that heart that comes and goes at its bidding, and can leave all to follow it (*c*) at the command of interest. You will judge him another man's servant, who, whatever he is doing, will leave it all when his Master calls him, and follow him. Let men think what they will, God hath no part for the present in that soul that can do more to enjoy the world, then God: and counts any thing more necessary than to converse with, obey and serve him.

Fourthly, The delight and pleasure men take in earthly things, declare that their hearts are let out upon them: Where the heart is, there will the delights be. (*d*) Love is the very life of the soul, *Alsted. Theol. natur.* p. 613. When *Jona-*

(*d*) *Cordis vita est amor.*

(*c*) *Quæ tanta spes fuit quæ tanta necessitas hominem ad sinera erectum incurvavit, & defodit, & in fundum telluris intima mersit ut eruerent autem non vil more periculo quærendum quam possidendum,* Sen.

than's

than's heart was knit with the heart of *David*, 1 *Sam.* 18. 1. as an evidence of it: *Chap.* 19. 2, *Jonathan Saul's Son delighted much in David*: (e) Delight is the rest of desire, in the fruition of that good the heart is set upon, with satisfies the desire; [*Reynolds* of the Passions, *Cap.* 19. *Pag.* 197.] One calls it, the Sabbath of our thoughts, and that sweet tranquillity of mind which we receive from the presence and fruition of that good whereunto our desires have carried us: If then mens delights in the world exceed their pleasure in God, 'tis a sign the world is their chiefest good. Wicked men delight in their abominations, and that proves their ways to be of choice. *Isa.* 63. 3, *They have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations*: Try thy heart by thy pleasure; what is sweetest to thy taste, God or the World? What is most delightful to thee, to wait on God, though with the loss of the world, or to pursue the world, with the want of God? Men cheat their own Souls, when they say the enjoyment of God is better than the world; and yet for every trifle, and smallest advantage, can upon choice, baulk the enjoyment of God in his appointments, and cannot adventure the least loss and prejudice to their interest, though it were for the nearest fellowship with God; certainly that which is the Souls greatest pleasure, that will it make after when left to its liberty: Canst thou leave the

(e) *Delectatio sit quies quædam appetitus consideratæ præsentiæ boni delectantis quod appetitui satisfaciet.* Aqui. 1. 2. 9. 31. 1. 2. M.

know of *Lebanon* for the waters of *Assyria*? Pass by a walk in Christ's gallery, to sit down and solace thy self on the dunghil-comforts of this life? then are not thy chiefest delights in God: *Psal.* 27. 4, *One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple*: If the beholding of God in Ordinances be thy delight, it will be the one thing in thy desires and endeavours; also all other things are nothing to that: If thy chiefest pleasure be in God, then nothing but a conviction of duty can make thee upon choice decline an opportunity of waiting on God; and even then also, when obedience to God sets thy hand to the world; delight in God will engage thy longings after him, and make thy greatest comforts, thou art then pursuing, a weight and a burden to thy soul, because they stand between thy heart and communion with God. Thy affections will be like the Kine that drew the Ark to *Bethshemesh*, that lowed after their Calves as they went, 1 *Sam.* 16. 12. When thou art constrained to draw in the Cart of thy duty-employments, even then will thy desires be lowing after the comfort of thy relation interest in God. How is it soul? speak: Is not a good Fair and Bargain sweeter to thee, and doth more affect thy heart, than a Sermon and a duty? Doth thou not use to follow the world with thy back on following with God and Saints, and not the clear rising in thy spirit, or cloud on thy comforts? if so, thy heart is

not

not yet ſupremely ſet on God.

Fifthly, Lothneſs to part with thy earthly comforts and intereſts tells thee, thy heart is too much upon them. *Jacob*'s unwillingneſs to part with *Benjamin*, was a ſign his heart was too much ſet upon him. *Judah* tells the Governour of *Egypt*, *That his Father's life was bound up in the Lad's life*, *Gen.* 44. 30. The Spouſes affection to her Beloved was ſeen in this, that when ſhe found him, ſhe held him, and would not let him go, *Cant* 3. 4. *I found him whom my ſoul loveth, I held him, and would not let him go.* Such is the teſtimony, that if mens hearts are on the things of this life, they hold them faſt, and will not let them go: Moſt men are too tenacious of their intereſts, to be dead to them: cloſe hands argue cleaving hearts to the world. Alas! with what reluctancy do men that have the abundance of this worlds goods, lay them out again for God! how hard is it to draw any proportions of charity from them that have this worlds goods? what arguments and reaſons will men be pleading for their ſparingneſs in parting with the Mammon of this world? and how much beneath their meaſure do moſt men expend their earthly things upon the calls that God gives them? This ſhews plainly, their heart is bound up in the fruition of theſe things. *Covetous men will ſooner part with their fleſh, than their gold* (ſaith *Auguſtine*) *ſhall I take my bread, and my water, and my fleſh that I have killed for my ſhearers, and give it to men whom I know not whence they be?* 1 *Sam.* 25. 11. (ſaith covetous *Nabal*) Covetous perſons cannot endure

to part with what they have. (a) The covetous man, while he hold fasts his riches, is held fast by them; and in preying on others, he himself becomes a prey, *August.* They are like a net, which takes in all the fish that comes at it, but lets out none again, except some small ones that are little worth: Earthly minds are seen in nothing more than in their tenacity, and close keeping of what they have; like dying men, whatever they take hold of, they let not go: This is the temper of many, they cannot scatter for God, nor honour him with their substance *There is that withholdeth more than is meet*, Prov. 11. 24. That's the character of one whose heart is on the world. (b) *He is not onely covetous that takes away other mens goods* (saith *Augustine*) *but he that covetously withholds his own*, and will not let them go when God hath use for them: Certainly, if Believers themselves are not their own, then they will one day know their estates and interests are not their own, but the Lord's, and to be at his dispose. How will the owner of that Colt Christ sent for rise up in judgment against many! no sooner did the Disciple say, *The Lord hath need of him, but straightway they let him go, Luk.* 19. 33, 34, 35. Shall one that pretended not so much to Christ (for ought we know) readily part with so much at the first request; and they that profess much love to Christ, refuse to lay out lesser things for him!

(a) *Avarus tenendo divitias tenetur a divitiis, & dum vult esse prædo fit præda.* Aug. (b) *Non solum avarus est qui rapit aliena, sed & ille avarus est qui cupide servat sua.* Aug.

This

This doth manifest the world is dearer to such then Jesus Christ.

Lastly, Then are mens hearts upon the world, when their trust and dependance is upon earthly things. We are apt to put confidence in friends, and therefore the Lord cautions *Israel* against such dependencies, as false deceiving things: *Trust not in a friend; put ye not confidence in a guide*, &c. *Micah.* 7. 5. The Spouse came leaning upon her Beloved in the wilderness, *Cant.* 8. 5. No sooner had the rich man store of goods, but he places his confidence in them, *Luke* 12. 19. *I will say to my soul; soul, thou hast goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry.* 'Tis natural to men that chuse the world for their treasure, to chuse it also for their trust; They that dare adventure their supreme affection on things, dare also take up their dependency on them. Men *chuse not a tree they think will rot*, *Isa.* 40. 20. If riches be thy choice, thou thinkest them worthy of thy relyance; or thou acteſt irrationally. Men that have wealth, *have inward thoughts that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations; they call their Lands after their own names*, *Psal.* 49. 11. 'Tis hard to have the good things of this life, and not to expect too much from them; so inviting is their appearance to a dependency on them: Earthly things are fair in promise, but false in performance; like quagmires covered with grass; men think them firm ground, but when they tread upon them, they soon become their graves. The Evangelist calls all that glorious pomp with

which *Agrippa* ſo amus'd ſpectators, but a meer ſhow, *Acts* 25. 23. When *Agrippa* was come, and *Bereniee*, with great pomp, 'tis with much fantaſie and external ſhow: All the glory of this world is but a pompous ſhew, that cheats beholders, and allures them to a deceived expectation: They that have much viſible comfort in creatures, live little by faith. How rare is it for men that have eſtates and riches for their poſterity, to commit them to divine care, by an act of pure recumbency on the promiſe, and to believe upon a naked word for all their ſupplies and needed comforts: *Such is our expectation whither we flee for help*, Iſa. 20. 6. An earthly heart is known by carnal truſt and dependency on earthly things. Ah ſouls! put your hearts into this ſcale, and ſee whether they do not preſs down to this preſent world: Speak, ſoul, who ſhalt ſhortly be weighed for eternity in the ballance of the Sanctuary; are not thy deſires, thy thoughts, thy reſtleſs labours, thy delights, thy cloſe adherence to, and dependency, all engaged about the things of this life, with the neglect of God, and heavenly things, thine own heart being Judge? And if ſo, then

Μετὰ πολλῆς φαντασίας.

Thy State is dangerous;
And thy Folly great.

Firſt, Thy State is dangerous; thou haſt not a dram of true grace in thee: *Love not the world, nor the things of the world: If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him*, 1 *Joh.* 2. 15. Do not flatter thy ſoul into perdition; if thou loveſt the world, thou doſt not love God:

God: *For the friendſhip of this world is enmity againſt God: Whoſoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God, James* 4. 4. He whoſe heart and mind is ſet after the world; he that will be rich, the bent and deſign of the heart is for it; that's the Butt he levels at, whatever he profeſſes: That's his great buſineſs and project; *Thine eyes and thy heart are not but for thy covetouſneſs, Jer.* 22. 17. *He maketh haſte to be rich, Prov.* 28. 20. drives furiouſly after the world: his heart is reconciled to all the means and waies that lead to it (be they never ſo claſhing with ſoul-advantages) that man, be he who he will, is a friend to the world, and an enemy to God; let him make the higheſt profeſſion poſſible: So did *Judas* get into the Church of God: ſo did *Demas* pray, preach, and ſo many hypocrites for a time: yea make many prayers, *Iſa.* 1. 15. Doth he profeſs love to God? ſo did the Jews: and yet their hearts went after their covetouſneſs, *Ezek.* 33. 31. Is he of a lovely ſpirit, and unblameable converſation? ſo was the young man in the Goſpel; his great deſire was to inherit eternal life, *Mark* 10. 17. that was his buſineſs to Chriſt; he deſired to know how he might be ſaved: he ſeemed to be all for Heaven: his life alſo was unblameable: *All theſe have I obſerved from my youth up, verſe* 20. He was of a ſweet, lovely ſpirit: 'Tis ſaid, *Jeſus beholding him, loved him, verſe* 21. and yet could not part with the world for Chriſt: had his heart knit to earthly things all the while, and went away ſorrowful; he could not conſent to ſell all and give to the poor,

ver. 22. no marks will serve that Soul's turn, whose heart is glued to the World, and cannot give up all to Christ's dispose? God and the World cannot dwell in that Soul, godliness and gain cannot keep house together: where the grace of God comes in truth, it teacheth men to deny worldly lusts, *Tit.* 2. 11, 12. He that hath no power to deny the cravings of a worldly heart, never yet received the grace of God in truth. *Grace* (saith one) *may stand with some transient acts of naughtiness, but never with covetousness*: Adams *on the* 2 *Epist. of* Pet. *p.* 9. 16. Noah *was once drunk with Wine, but never with the World*: Lot *twice Incestuous, never Covetous*: Peter *denied his Master thrice; it was not the love of the World, but the fear of the World brought him to it; for he had denied the World before he denied his Master*: *Once* David *was overcome with the Flesh, never with the World. Why did not these purge themselves from Adultery, Anger, Contention, and the like? because into these sins the infirmity of a Saint may fall; but if once into Covetousness, there is nothing of a Saint left, not the very name.* *Luther* acknowledges there was scarce a sin to which he had not been tempted, save to the sin of Covetousness. The Lord Jesus tells us that his Disciples are not of this World: some derive the word, *Holy*, from *Earth*, and a privative particle, in that redemption from the earth, is the great work of holiness: All they that partake of the Cross of Christ, *are crucified to the World, and the World to them, Gal.* 16. 14. Not a jot of the benefits of Christ, are treasur'd

Ayios ab a & γῆ.

up

up in that Soul where the God of this World dwells; and if without Christ, without hope; thy case is desperate if thy heart be earthly, under the ruling power of this World; thou art yet in a graceless state, and no grace, no glory; if thou mindest earthly things, destruction is thy end, *Phil.* 3. 19. If thou art one of this World, whose heart is after thy covetousness, thy portion is in this World, *Psal.* 17. 14 All thy Heaven is on this side the Grave: *For this ye know, that no Whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an Idolater, hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ, and of God, Eph.* 5. 5. 'Tis joyned with the most abominable sins, Thievery, Drunkenness, Adultery, Idolatry, Extortion, *for which things sake, the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience, Col.* 3. 5, 6. The Scripture calls covetous men, cursed children, 2 *Pet.* 2. 14. *An heart they have* (a) *exercised with covetous practices, cursed children*; really cursed with a detestation, such whom God abhorreth, *Psal.* 10. 3. *And the wicked blesseth the covetous, whom God abhorreth.* A woe is pronounced against them, *Hab.* 2. 9. *Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil:* One would think this a duty, or at least very commendable, to provide for our Family, and get what we can for our children, and to endeavour to secure our houses from any suf-

(a) γεγυμνασμένον, exercised as Wrestlers are, who contend for victory with all their Might, being trained up to it by long exercise, κατέχειν τέχνα.

fering and calamity: but if this be mens end, to ſet their neſt on high, to get great things for themſelves, and ſo to manage their affairs, as to avoid all (b) ſufferings for God, there's a dreadful woe hangs over their heads, and diſappointment of all their deſign in the iſſue: for inſtead of honour, they are brought to ſhame in the end: *Thou haſt conſulted ſhame to thy own houſe, and ſinned againſt thy own ſoul*, ver. 10. They are unworthy of any ſociety with men: *I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a Brother, be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, with ſuch a one, no, not to eat*, 1 *Cor.* 5. 11. and ſhall be cut off from all communion with God to all eternity: *Know ye not that the unrighteous ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God: be not deceived, neither Fornicator, nor Idolater, nor Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Drunkards, nor Revilers, nor Extortioners ſhall inherit the Kingdom of God*, 1 *Cor.* 6. 9, 10.

Secondly, as thy ſtate is dangerous, if thou art one who loveſt this preſent World: ſo thy folly is great, to ſet thy heart upon the World.

After thou haſt been convinced of the evil of ſuch a ſpirit and practice, and haſt felt the ſmart of it in thy own ſoul.

After thou haſt been arraigned at the bar of thy Conſcience, and condemned in thy own heart for this Sin, (as every truly convinced

(b) *Malum hic notat id, quod homines vulgo pro malo habent, & quod fugit & horret caro, nimirum crucem, humilitatem, & perſequutionem.*

Soul

Soul is,) if ever the spirit of bondage hath been at work in thy heart, (as thou hast confessed) then hast thou found this sin more bitter than death to thee: and now to return again to such courses as will break thy bones again, and put thy soul to greater torture than ever, (as all relapses do,) this is folly indeed.

After thou hast chosen God for thy portion, Christ for thy treasure, Godliness for thy gain, the inheritance with the Saints for thy Land, a mansion in Heaven for thy house, Christ's tried Gold for thy Money, a conversation in Heaven for thy Trade, the Father, Son and Spirit, for thy All here, and for ever, (as thou hast done, or fearfully belied thy profession,) that after all this thou should'st turn again to these beggerly elements, and exchange God for the world, a Crown for crumbs, a Throne for thorns, a Dowry in Heaven for a dunghill on earth: an eternal weight of Glory for a burden of thick clay: fellowship with God for defiling converse with dirt and bespotting trash: a Burgesship in Heaven for a name written in the earth: is not this folly, folly? Not that one who had real interest in God and things above, can ever fully and finally forfeit them, and lose them again: (for, once in Christ, and ever in Christ) but those things thou did'st once seem to choose for thy chiefest interest, and hast professed hopes of a certain title to these supreme treasures: and now, to sell thy hopes of God and Glory for that (c) vomit thou hadst spewed up, and mire thou had'st been washed from, this is madness indeed.

(c) Speciosa supplicia & justima vomitus.

After

After you have seen so often the vanity and uncertainty of these things below, that they are empty, and will not satisfie; they cannot quench thy thirst, or fill thy hungry soul; cannot afford the least rest to thy weary heart; but are still short of thy expectations; thou lookest for peace, and behold they give thee trouble; thou thinkest to gather Roses, and they prick thy fingers; and when thou hopest to find rest in them, and sayest, Soul, take thy ease in thy full bags, and fair estate; thy pleasant house, near relations; then they prove swords to pierce thee, or briers to rend thee; or at the best, but wind that does but swell, not nourish thee. Thou hast also found them fading things, that will not stay, rare, ripe, fruit that soon rots; a moth, an East-wind take off all: they are a pleasing gourd one day, and withered the next, *Jonah 4. 7. God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered.* A sickness comes and takes away thy child, and all the hopes of thy house perish with him: Thy Customers break, and thou art impoverished: The fire burns down thy house, and thou art undone: Thy Heir it may be proves a Prodigal, and all thy gatherings are scattered: so uncertain, empty, perishing, are these things, and thou knowest them to be so, and hast found them such, and yet thy heart runs after them: and with the Dog in the Fable, thou leavest substance to catch at shadows: neglecting unseen, sure, sweet, satisfying and eternal things, for things that are not: and is not this madness?

Mundus perit & tu Mundum quæris.

(It

(The world perisheth, and yet seekest thou after the things thereof? *Petrarch.*)

After you have found better things, and tasted the sweetness of them, you have experienced the light of God's countenance to be beyond all corn, and wine, and oyl: his loving-kindness to be better than life: a day in his Courts to be more eligible than a thousand elsewhere, *Psal.* 4. 6, 7. O how sweet hath his Word been to thy taste, sweeter than the honey and the honey-comb! how often hath God cheered, quickened and strengthned thy heart in thy approaches to him, and thou hast said (as *David* of *Goliah*'s sword) there is none like this: And as the Disciples when with Christ in the Mount, 'tis good being here: Lord evermore give me this bread: and yet after all this, that thou shouldest upon choice, leave these for the world, and prefer thy shop, thy trade, thy field, house, money, before these divine and approved treasures: This is madness.

After so many confessions of this sin before the Lord and his people, and so many prayers and cries to God against it, and for grace to subdue thy earthly heart with many promises, and declared purposes to turn no more to this folly: that thou shouldest so easily, so speedily be reconciled to the world again, and reassume thy affections to these old lovers after all: this is madness, and will exceedingly greaten thy guilt and torment, when the Lord shall make inquisition for these things: when thy convictions, prayers and vows shall return as so many Serjeants upon thy back, to arrest thy guilty con-

science,

ſcience, and as ſo many witneſſes to prove God's charge againſt thee: that at ſuch a time and ſuch a time, in thy cloſet, in the Congregation of the Lord's people, in days of humiliation and preparation-ſeaſons, on thy ſick-bed, under ſuch a word and rod, thy heart did melt over thy ſin, and thou didſt ſolemnly renew thy Covenant againſt it: and now to have thy prayers, and tears, and promiſes: yea, and God too againſt thee, for thy Apoſtacy after ſuch Lovers as thou thy ſelf wilt loath another day, and be aſhamed to own in the preſence of God, Saints and Angels, this is folly, folly.

Now when God is puniſhing thee for this very ſin, by ſtripping thee of thy Idols, and pouring out the vials of his wrath upon this *Euphrates*, thy riches, intereſt, trade, and earthly comforts, over which thou haſt carried away thy heart from him, and now while the Rod is upon thy back, thou ſhould'ſt hold faſt thine iniquity, and refuſe to return: this is deſperate and incorrigible folly. And this is the practice of moſt this day: God blows upon their trades and intereſts for following them, and letting his houſe lie waſte: and yet they purſue them ſtill: The Lord takes out the bottom of their bags, and yet they put in more money into them. God ſmites men for the iniquity of their covetouſneſs, and yet they go on ſrowardly in the way of their heart, *Iſa.* 57. 17. God is hedging up the way of men's Lovers, and yet they break thorough to overtake them: So it was with *Iſrael*, God had hedg'd up her way, made a wall that ſhe ſhould not find her paths: and yet ſhe

fol-

lowed after them. *Hoſ.* 2. 6. *And ſhe ſhall follow after her Lovers,* (O incorrigible wickedneſs!) *but* (ſaith God) *ſhe ſhall not overtake them: The Lord is plucking down mens bricks, but they build with hewn ſtone; the Sycamores are cut down, but they change them into Cedars, Iſa.* 9. 10. Providence pulls away unduly purſued intereſts, but men catch at them again. This is daring wickedneſs, and a telling God to his face, they fear him not, neither will they return. *Jer.* 5. 3. *Thou haſt ſtricken them, but they have not grieved,* (*m*) *thou haſt conſumed, but they have refuſed to receive correction: they have made their faces harder than a Rock: they have refuſed to return:* This is our caſe, and ſhould it not be for a lamentation?

Laſtly, When nothing but ruine and deſtruction is before our eyes: manifeſt danger of loſing all, even Intereſt, Goſpel, Life, and all that is dear to us ſeems to be a going: and yet to purſue theſe things, with neglect of our ſouls, is madneſs beyond parallel, and a dangerous ſymptome of approaching ruine. If men are not given up to a ſpirit of blindneſs, they muſt needs ſee that waſting deſtructions are upon us: gray hairs are here and there, and we ſee it not, *Hoſ.* 7. 9, 10. *Strangers have devoured his ſtrength, and he knoweth it not; yea, gray hairs are here and there, yet he layeth it not to heart; and the pride of Iſrael doth teſtifie to his face, and they do not return to the Lord their God*

(*m*) *Quid miſerius miſero non miſerante ſeipſum?* Aug. What's more miſerable than a man in miſery not pitying himſelf.

nor

not ſeek him for all this. (*) *They felt the pain, but did not acknowledge the cauſe and fountain of all thoſe evils,* (ſaith *Zanchy*) *and this ſhew'd they were deſperate and incurable, in that they were convicted of their evil caſe, and yet would not return to the Lord.* No ſpot more dangerous than continuance in ſin under utmoſt means of reformation and confeſſed danger of ruine. *If our tranſgreſſions and ſins be upon us, and we pine away in them: how ſhall we then live?* Ezek. 33. 10.

USE IV.

If the Heavenly Trade be the beſt Trade, &c. Then this offers Counſel and exhortation to five ſorts of perſons.

1. *To ſuch as are ſtrangers to this Heavenly Trade.*

Counſel 1. Such as are ſtrangers to this Heavenly Trade: you that never were acquainted with this high Calling, but have ſpent all your time about things that periſh, trafficking about Hell and Damnation. Be you exhorted to ſet about this choiſe, rich, and bleſſed Trade.

There are four Arguments that uſually ſway with rational perſons in their choice of earthly Callings, which are alſo weighty inducements unto all not yet concerned to ſpeed upon this Heavenly Trade.

(*) *Sentit quidem dolores ſed non agnoſcit cauſam & fontem ſui mali; Confirmat eſſe* Iſraelem *deſperatum & incurabilem quia convictus non tamen redit ad Dominum.* Zanch.

Arg.

Arg. 1. Firſt, Neceſſity puts men on employment, and none are greater than theirs who are without this Divine Calling. Sinners, you that are yet without God in the World, you are miſerably poor, and ready to periſh; you are worth nothing but ſin and miſery; He is a poor man that hath nothing to live upon; and ſuch are you, while without this line of communication, and ſtrangers to theſe ſupreme concerns: You are ſpiritually poor, and have nothing (as yet) for your Souls to live on here, or to all eternity, *Rev.* 3. 17. *And knoweſt not that thou art wretched, and miſerable, and poor, and blind, and naked.* Poverty is one of the miſeries of all unchanged ſouls; and that which aggravates it, is this; that they think themſelves rich, and yet have nothing; no Food to fill them, but empty huſks, and ſwines meat; no Rayment to cover them, but filthy rags and confuſion, no Houſe to ſhelter them from the ſtorms of Divine wrath; or any Habitation to receive them, but an infernal Lake of Fire and Brimſtone, and a receptacle with damned Devils: not a friend to help them: not an eye to pitty them: There are none ſo poor in the World but they have ſomething or other to help them, ſomething in hand, or ſomething in hope: ſomething of their own, or ſomething of others; if they can't dig, yet they can beg: if they have not intereſts to maintain them, yet they find pitty to relieve them: But a Chriſtleſs Sinner hath nothing to ſupply his immortal part: nothing in hand, nothing in hope: nothing of his own, nothing of

others

others, that can contribute the leaſt good to his undone Soul, whatever he lives on, is nothing but wind and emptineſs; *He feeds on aſhes, a deceived heart turns him aſide, Iſa.* 44. 20. He crams his ſtarved Soul with filthy dung and excrements, (ſo loathſome are all the pleaſures of ſin he lives on,) *Aliens from the Commonwealth of* Iſrael, *ſtrangers from the Covenants of Promiſe; having no hope, and without God in the World, Eph.* 2. 12. This is your condition, Souls, while without this Heavenly Trade; you are miſerably poor, what-ever you have in the World, you have nothing in God; what-ever your Bodies and Families have, your Souls have nothing: (c) *'Tis little profit to enjoy all things, and miſs that one thing by which only we come to uſe them*, Aug. You labour for vanity, and lie down in ſorrow; and have you not reaſon to look out after ſome courſe to help you, and to embrace this overture of a calling that will maintain and enrich you here, and for ever? The Lepers caſe is thine; if thou ſit ſtill in thy condition, thou dieſt: In the World's fulneſs is famine: in thy ſecurity and falſe hopes, is death alſo. If thou adventure an offer'd grace, it may ſave thee: however thou can'ſt but die, 2 *King.* 7. 3, 4.

Again, you are not only poor, but Bankrupts, your poverty is of your own procurement, and the iſſue of your prodigality: you had once a fair Eſtate, but loſt it: God, Grace add Glory was yours by the firſt Covenant, *Luke* 15. 30. but

(c) *Univerſa humilit. r bibit qui unum illud quo univerſa utatur non habet.*

you

you have trifled it away for forbidden-fruit, and ſpent all you had on Harlot; you have couſum'd your Lords goods alſo in riotous living, and waſted a large ſtock committed to your truſt, and now muſt give an account of your Stewardſhip: were it only your perſonal wants that your folly hath brought upon you, (though that be heavy) yet 'tis comparatively tolerable; but reſtitution muſt be made, and that is unconceivably diſtreſſing. A dreadful word, Sinners, lies againſt you! (how can you bear it? how can you eat, drink, talk, or ſleep in peace? much leſs rejoyce when the hand-writing is againſt the Wall?) 'tis this, *Give an account of thy ſtewardſhip*, Luke 16. 2. A review of thy paſt-time muſt be expected, by what means thou did'ſt reduce thy miſerable ſoul to this low eſtate, aud an account of thy Stewardſhip will be required; and then when too late, thou wilt ſay with the Steward, *What ſhall I do*, verſe 3. and it is not more adviſable now to take this counſel of *Eliphaz*, *To acquaint thy ſelf with God, and be at peace, thereby good ſhall come unto thee* Job 22. 21. to return to that Trade which thou haſt left, and recover the Treaſure which thou haſt loſt, that ſo thy account may be comfortable in the day of Chriſt?

Nay further, you are not onely poor, and bankrupts, but deeply in debt; debtors to God, to whom you owe your ſelves and all that you have, by the Law of Creation and Covenant-obligation, but never yet diſcharg'd that due to this very day. You are in debt to God

or all your mercies in Creation and Providence, Patience-mercy, Preservation-mercy, Prevening-mercy, Bounty-mercy; there's never a moment but God is laying out some new mercy upon thee, of which thou hast never made retribution to this day.

Debtors to the Law of God, which hath its full and just claim on you, a Law that is just, righteous and good, and to which you owe obedience by just and unquestionable ties, and yet have never yielded any right subjection to it all your days, but have violated all its righteous Commands every day and moment of your life, both in Thought, Word and Deed: *For he that keepeth the whole Law, and yet offendeth in one point or Iota, is guilty of all*, Jam. 2. 10.

Debtors to Conscience, whose Law is in force against you, and by which you shall be judged. *Rom.* 2. 14, 15. *These having not the Law, are a Law to themselves, which shew the works of the Law written in their hearts; their Conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing, or excusing one another:* And yet you have broken these Conscience-bonds, casting its cords from you: How many ties hath Conscience laid upon you which you have broken, going against the light and dictates thereof!

Debtors to all the World, to whom, in some respect or other, you are obliged. There are duties you owe to all men, to love them, and pray for them: to all your Neighbours and Acquaintance, to do them good as you have opportunity, and to seek and endeavour their Salvation

vation to your power, which you have not done to this day. There are duties you owe to your Relations, Friends and Family, which you have neglected, and have been encreasing your Original debt, by running on new scores every day, which can never be cancell'd, or a power obtained to discharge your duties acceptably, till you come to Christ, and enter your Souls into his new and everlasting Covenant, setting upon those great and Evangelical duties of it.

Your slavery is also great till you come over to this blessed work: You are in bondage unto Satan: *Know ye not, that to whom ye yield your selves servants to obey, his servants ye are whom ye obey*, Rom. 6. 16. You serve incomparably the worst Lord; a cruel Lord who hath no mercy, but delights in the misery of fallen man; *A roaring Lion that goes about seeking to devour*, 1 Pet. 5. 8. A cursed one cast off from God, cursed above all creatures; *reserved in everlasting chains under darkness to the judgment of the great day*, Gen. 3. 14. *Judge, verse* 6. Thine implacable enemy that hates thee with a perfect hatred: An Accuser, that never speaks well of any. A Murderer he was from the beginning *Rev.* 12. v. 10. and the Original cause of all the destruction in Earth and Hell. A false and deceitful creature, that never kept his word with any: A Lyar, and the Father of Lyes, *Joh.* 8. 44. one that will be too hard for you, and cheat your Souls into destruction. A miserable poor creature, one that hath lost all his glory and excellency, and hath nothing to give you for all your service, but some of the same flames in which

he must fry for ever. This, Sinners, is your Lord, whom you have chosen and served all your days: And as you serve the worst Lord, so do you the worst work; base, filthy, shamesful, cursed work: Such are all thy actions whiles in an unchanged state; you do hard work, no service like it; you work, and have no food to refresh you, wich is the cruellest bondage: *Israel* in *Egypt* wrought hard, and yet had Fleshpots, Onions and Garlick to relieve them: but you have nothing to feed your hopes and affections, but lies and vanity: you work, and have no payment to cover you; all your employment makes you naked, you labour and have no rest; weary and heavy laden, and yet feel it not, *Gen.* 3. 7. Other Labourers have their successive quietudes, but you have none: the Hireling hath his shadow, the Labourer hath his evening to give over his work, his Bed to sleep on. but your work admits of no rest, 'tis never done, you do the Devils work day and night, waking and sleeping: nay, while you eat and drink, your work still goes on. O sad servitude! You work and have no wages: All earthly Labourers have their penny, something or other to compensate their pains, money or maintenance; but you have nothing in hand or hope, here or hereafter, but death and damnation: the fruit of your labours here, is more bitter than death, and the wages at the end of your day, wrath and vengeance, worm and fire (c) *Mark* 9. 44.

(c) *There can be no mirth* (saith Latimer) *where weeping is served in for the first course, and gnashing of teeth for the second.*

And

And is not this bad employment? and is not time sinners, to change your calling, and to accept this offer made you of this excellent Trade?

Arg. 2. Secondly, The danger that attends your present state should put you on a timely relinquishment of it: You are poor, and that expoles you to scorn and contempt, to oppression, treading down, and crushing, to devouring and destruction; you are not safe from ruine one moment; the next knock at thy door may be a call to Judgment *Prov.* 17. 5. *Amos.* 4. 1. *Hab.* 3. 14. *Prov.* 10 15. When thou liest down, thou mayest make thy bed in Hell; when thou awakest, thou mayest see God on the Throne, thy Soul at the Bar, thy accusers at the right hand, the Evidence in thy one breast, the Sentence written in capital letters, *Go ye cursed*: Under thy feet a bottomless lake of fire and brimstone; round about thee cruel Devils ready to seize upon thee, and lodge thy guilty condemned soule in thine eternal home, *Matth.* 24 51. You have been Prodigals wasting what is not your own, and are in danger every day of a charge against you.

You are deeply in debt, and in danger of an arrest every hour; when you go forth, death may be at your heels; when you return, destruction may enter with you: O the uncertainty of thy time sinner! the danger of thy eternity, the absolute ruine of thy immortal soul, if thy reckoning begin before thy work: and hast thou not reason then to hasten about thy great concern, and to burn no more daylight in works of darkness?

Arg. 3. Thirdly, Thy duty ſhould quicken thy undertaking in this great employment: Religion is not your Liberty, but your manifold Debt: The Law of Creation binds you unto God: you will confeſs you were made by him, and God will profeſs you were made for him, *Iſa.* 43.21. *This people have I formed for my ſelf, that they ſhould ſhew forth my praiſe.* Your fall from the Covenant of Works, is not your liberty from the eſſential duties of it: neither is your incapacity to perform it, a diſpenſation of your obedience: 'tis ſtill your duty to return from whence you fell; to take the Lord to be your God, to love him with all your heart, and with all your might; to truſt in him, to fear and obey him. A draught of theſe Covenant-duties did God place in your Conſcience, by which you ſhall be judged, *Rom.* 2. 12. 15. though the Counterpane you have defaced, yet the Original Deed is with God, and will be brought forth in the day of Chriſt againſt ſuch as have not taken the Lord for their God.

You are alſo maintained by God, and that obliges you to him. 'Twas the Argument the Apoſtle urged to the Maſters of Reaſon in that age, why they ſhould ſeek the Lord; becauſe 'twas from him they had their ſubſiſtence, *Acts* 17. 28. *For in him we live, and move, and have our being.* If God maintains you, 'tis rational he ſhould have the uſe of you. 'Twas the reaſon *Moſes* uſed to prove Gods right to *Iſraels* all, *Deut.* 32. 9, to 15. *The Lords portion is his people*; Jacob *is the lot of his inheritance*: Why? *He found him in the deſert Land, in the waſte*

waste howling wilderness; he led him about; he instructed him; he kept him as the apple of his eye: As an Eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him. and there was no strange God with him: (And therefore no reason they should leave him for strangers.) *He made him ride upon the high places of the earth, that he might eat the increase of the field; and he made him to suck honey out of the Rock, and oyl out of the flinty Rock: Butter of Kine, and milk of Sheep, with fat of Lambs and Rams, of the breed of Bashan, and Goats, with the fat of kidnies, of wheat, and thou didst drink the pure blood of the Grape.* Mercies are words and bands by which the Lord obligeth men to himself: *I drew them with cords of a man, and with bands of love, Hos.* 11. 4. All thy life (sinner) hath been full of these constraints of mercy and love, to take the Lord to be thy God.

The Gospel of Grace which you profess to own and receive, binds you to seek first the Kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof, *Matth.* 6. 33. to do the work of God, to labour for that bread which endures to eternal life; to work the works of God, *Joh.* 6. 27, 28. to be no more your own, but the Lord's, 1 *Cor.* 6. 19, 20. Cease to call or think your selves Christians; tell the world you do not believe or hope to be saved by a crucified Christ, or else come over to him, and be disposed by his sacred Will. This is your duty.

Argum. 4. Fourthly, Weigh the unſpeakable gain that will ſurely accrew to you, if you ſet up this trade of Godlineſs. I have already ſhewn in the demonſtration of this point, the great profit that this Heavenly Trade will turn unto, to all that deal throughly in it, to which I adviſe you to caſt back your eye, and take three or four conſiderations more, to convince your underſtandings that Religion is eligible on grounds of greateſt intereſt: For,

Firſt, Religion will maintain you in the hardeſt times: So will not other Trades; there may be ſeaſons when earthly employments will turn to no accounts. You have heard that riches *profit not in the day of wrath:* and ſome of you have ſeen the time, when they that work could yet ſcarcely eat; but Gods work is meat and drink, when daily bread fails, *John* 4.30. *I have meat to eat that you know not of. Godlineſs hath the promiſe of the life that now is, and of that which is to come,* 1 Tim. 4. 8. *God careth for the righteous, and when the Lions lack, and are hunger bit, they that fear the Lord ſhall want no good thing,* Pſal. 34. 10. They ſhall be ſure to be provided for, whoever wants: God hath paſt his word for it: All things are theirs by purchaſe, who are Chriſts by choice; that is (ſaith *Piſcator*) (o) *All earthly things are deſigned of God for your uſe, and the furtherance of your ſalvation.* Not as if the Saints had a right to other mens intereſts. The *Apoſtle doth not ſpeak here* (ſaith *Pareus*) *of civil poſſeſſions, but of that divine order by*

(o) *Omnes res terrenæ veſtris uſibus, & veſtræ ſalutis à Deo deſtinatæ ſunt.*

H. which

which all things ought to ſerve the good and advantage of the Church of God. The earth is the Lords, and the fulneſs thereof. All which is given into the hands of Chriſt for the good of his people: *And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the Church,* Epheſ. 1.22. The whole Earth is but Gods Kitchin, for the maintenance of his houſe; and if he will feed his ſervants and ſlaves, much more his children: *He gives to all their meat in due ſeaſon, and ſatisfies the deſires of every living thing.* Much more will he care for, and give food convenient to his living in *Jeruſalem.* Indeed Believers are not of the World, and therefore have not their portions in the World: they are the Heirs of Heaven, and have no promiſe of more on Earth than will comfortably carry them home, and ſuffice for the diſcharge of thoſe offices aſſigned to them here: They are Servants, not Heirs, who carry the Cloak-bags in their journey. Perſons of grandeur bear no more about them than for preſent uſe. Surely, were earthly treaſures good for heaven-born ſouls, he that gives better things would not deny theſe. But God knows enough is as good as a feaſt: and ſo much the Saints ſhall have in their paſſage home. No man ſends his ſervants a journey, but he allows them enough to carry them through; and ſo will God to his: If he maintains elders and enemies, much more will he feed his faithful ſervants and labourers. He hath promiſed to ſupply all their wants, *Phil.* 4. 19. and is able to make it good. If he thinks it not much to give them a Crown, he will not deny them Crumbs. If

God

God ſhould let his work-men want, his work would ceaſe; his own intereſt, as well as his promiſe, obliges him to look after ſuch: his Love, Truth, Glory, with all his Attributes, are concerned to maintain his people in his work; and therefore nothing more ſure than daily bread, and ſufficiency in all things to ſuch as ſerve and obey him.

Secondly, Godlineſs will ſecure you in dangerous times, *Prov.* 3. 23. *Thou ſhalt then walk in thy way ſafely, and thy foot ſhall not ſtumble; when thou lieſt down, thou ſhalt not be afraid; yea thou ſhalt lie down, and thy ſleep ſhall be ſweet* v. 24. *For the Lord ſhall be thy confidence, and ſhall keep thy foot from being taken.* The way of duty is the way of ſafety: whatever men think, the greateſt ſecurity is in the boldeſt Adventures for God (if regular;) where his Sun does guide you, there his ſhadow will cover you; *who ſhall harm you if you are followers of that which is good?* 1 *Pet.* 3. 13. Men may threaten you, but cannot injure you; they may ſpoil your eſtates, impriſon your bodies, but cannot do you any real harm; while men keep with God, God will abide with them; his preſence ſhall fence them, his favour ſhall ſhield them, his Angels ſhall encamp about them; all his Attributes ſhall guard and ſecure them: God's people that cleave to him in duty, are as the *Hebrews* in *Goſhen*, as *Iſrael* in the wilderneſs, as *Noah* in the Ark; they onely are ſafe from ruining evils, when others are expoſed to deſtroying judgments.

Thirdly, Nay Holineſs will not onely maintain and ſecure you; but it will alſo enrich you, and

and fill you with the best Treasures, the true Riches, *Luke.* 16. 11. the tryed gold that cannot be corrupted or defrauded, *Matth.* 6.20. It will furnish you with the unsearchable riches of Christ: the world hath its treasures; and so hath Christ his precious substance, to bestow on all that trade with and for him; as hath been already shewn.

Fourthly, Piety will cheer and delight you; no comforts like theirs who walk with God in truth: This was *Hezekiah*'s cordial when under a sentence of death, *Isa.* 38. 3. *Remember, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart*; And *Paul*'s rejoycing, *that in all simplicity and godly sincerity he had his conversation in this world*, 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. The purest pleasures flow down from the Throne, and steam in through Sanctuary-waters into the soul: Alas! what are those drossy comforts that run thorough the worlds channels; which onely leave a slime behind, and then empty themselves into the dead Sea of perdition, *perishing in their using*, *Col.* 2. 22. Carnal mirth hath a pleasant entrance, but an ill farewell, *Prov.* 14. 13. *Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heavinesse*: But Religion breeds the best contentments, and most satisfying pleasures, *Psal.* 36. 8. *They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatnes of thy house, and thou shalt make them drink of the rivers of thy pleasures.*

Fifthly, Wisdom's Trade will make you truly great and honourable, and give you a place to walk among those that stand by, *Zach.* 3. 7.

That

That is (saith *Junius*) (p) *I will place thee in the same dignity the Angels of God enjoy in Heaven, and thou shalt dwell in the same Church among those Myriades*, Prov. 4. 8. *Exalt her, and she shall promote thee; she shall bring thee to honour when thou dost embrace her.* V. 9. *She shall give to thine head an Ornament of Grace, a Crown of Glory shall she deliver thee.* How contemptibly soever the World looks on the ways of Godliness, and those that espouse them; yet all true greatness lies on the side of piety. All the worlds glory is but a Pageant, a meer shew of honour, compared to that which is on the head of every true Believer: Saints have the noblest extraction, born of God: the highest dignity, *made Kings and Priests unto God*, Rev. 1. 6. *Ye shall be unto me a kingdom of Priests*, Exod. 19. 6. Cloathed with the richest Ornaments, *perfect through divine comeliness*, Ezek. 16. 10, to 15. appointed to a kingdom that is everlasting, assured of Thrones and Crowns with Christ for evermore, *Rev.* 3. 21. *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my Throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his Throne.* A sure Throne shall Believers have above, as certain as Christ is now upon his Fathers Throne; and the same Throne that the Father gives to Christ, *specifically*, though not *gradually*: A Crown fitted to their heads; indeed Saints cannot wear the Crown Christ doth; his is the Redeemers Crown; theirs is the Redeemeds, made of the

(p) *Constituam te in eadem dignitate qua sunt Angeli Dei in Cœlo, & inter ipsorum Myriadas in eadem Ecclesia conversaberis.*

same

same glory: *Joh.* 17. 24. *Father I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me,* 2 *Tim.* 2. 12. *If we suffer, we shall also reign with him.* O blessed glory, and greatly to be longed for! whose measure is incomprehensible, whose duration is undeterminable.

Now, Sinners; If these Arguments convince you that 'tis your necessity, interest and duty to set upon this great imployment, and you find your hearts really willing to come up to the proposed terms of this high Calling, and embrace any counsels that lead thereto. (a) Then;

Direct. 1. First; You must get a capacity for so excellent an undertaking: Heavenly work is too high for earthly natures; and special service for common endowments: *They that are in the flesh cannot please God, Rom.* 8. 8. No creature can act beyond its being, 'tis above the sphere of unchanged nature to carry up the Soul to things above, there must be a spiritual principle before there can be a heavenly operation; you must first be God's workmanship before you can do his work; *and be created to good works before you can walk therein,* Eph. 2. 10. *'Tis a sad thing* (saith Mr. *Caryl*) *to see a bad man do that which is bad; yet it is a sadder sight to see a bad man continuing in his state, to go on doing good; this is the acting of the new creature's part in the old creature's state, and what will that*

Ultra posse non est esse.

Caryl; Nature and principles of Love.

(a) *Prima sanitatis pars est velle sanari.* A willingness to be healed is the first part of health. *Sen.*

avail?

avail? To set upon Religion in an unregenerate state, is labour in vain: the dumb may as well speak, the blind see, the dead walk, while they remain such, as they that are evil do good: *Can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit?* Mat. 7. 18. *Or a Fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?* Jam. 3. 11. No more can an unsanctified Soul do holy work. The person must be gracious before the work can be good: *God had first respect to* Abel, *and then to his Offering*, Gen. 4. 4. The ungrafted Cherry-tree brings forth but harsh Fruit, let the soyl and dressing be never so good: so is the Soul under the highest priviledges and performances without implantation into Christ. The Root must bear the Branch, before the Branch can bear Fruit; a breaking off from the wild Olive with a participation of the fatness of the good Olive-tree, is absolutely necessary to true faithfulness, *Rom.* 11. 17, 18. Four things are needful to make an Action Evangelically good; a good Principle, Matter, Form and End: neither of which is consistent with a man in his natural state. 'Tis dangerous also as well as vain, for persons to set upon doing good, and never care to become good: for this deceives their own Souls, making them think their condition safe when they are *wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked*, Rev. 3. 16. and not only feeds an Errour in their state, but strongly hinders the cure, while these unprofitable duties consume Salvation-time, and destroy Salvation-hopes: Despair is usually the Issue of Presumption; and they that conceit too soon that all is

well

well, shall conclude when too late, that it shall never be better: This then is your first work, (Souls) *To be sanctified and made meet for your Masters use, and prepared* (b) *to every good work*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 21. Labour to get your natures changed, and hearts quickened; you must be born again, or cannot see the Kingdom of God: Be looking to Jesus to create in you a new heart, a renewed mind, will and affections, to have a saving principle put into your hearts, and a disposition of Soul towards the whole will of God: Cry mightily for the Spirit, and wait for his movings upon the face of Sanctuary-waters, and for a mighty power of God in the Gospel upon your Souls: Get under the healing-wings of Christ, and rest not looking unto Jesus till virtue go out from him to heal your Souls: If this be thy restless desire, thou can'st not let Christ alone, running after him, crying *Jesus thou Son of* David, *have mercy upon me*; he will turn again, and have compassion, and give the holy Spirit to them that unfeignedly and incessantly ask him, *Mark* 10. 47. 48. 49. *Luke*, 11. 13.

Direct. 2. Secondly, cease from your own works. *Isa.* 55. 7. *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy:* The first step in returning to God, is departing from sin and self; (c) *Neither can we* (saith Calvin) *hold converse with a holy God,*

(d) ητοιμασμενον, fashioned as a Vessel: the meaning is (saith Dr. *Preston*) that then a man is good when his heart is fitted to good works. (c) *Nihil nobis cum Deo esse potest nisi à nobis discedamus.* Calv.

till

till we be estranged from our unholy self. When the Apostle advises the *Ephesians* to put on the new man, *Eph.* 4. 24. He first exhorts them to put off the old, with his whole conversation: *vers.* 22. *That ye put of concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt*: Grace builds not on an old foundation, neither does it adorn, but reform the former conversation of called Saints; there is no cloathing upon in regeneration work, the old garments must off before the new will come on: Religion is not a covering for, but a stripping off a sinful life, neither can you be free to set on God's work till you leave your old works. *Rom.* 6. 20. *For when you were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness*: You had nothing to do with holiness you had no freedom to do God's work while you were Sins servants: *He speak of their actual liberty from grace, not their legal freedom,* (*d*) saith *Paraus*;) you are not at liberty to do the work of holiness, while under the command of sin. No man can serve two Masters: *Mat.* 6. 24. that is, two contrary Lords, *How can the same man* (*e*)(saith *Grotius*) *follow godliness as his work, and at the same time be distracted with cares about getting and keeping earthly things?* 'Tis a vainty for persons to dream of a compliance between sin and holiness whose work is too inconsistent for one Soul at one time; ruling iniquity and grace, are

(*d*) *Libertas hic deinfacto non de jure intelligater.* (*e*) *Quomodo poterit unus idemque homo pietati se quantum opus est impendere & simul circa divitias quærendas servandasque perpetua solicitudine distrahi?* Grot.

two

two contrary ſtates, which cannot meet in one perſon and time: Never think of ſetting up on the Heavenly Trade, till you are freed from helliſh ſervitude, and inveſted with the liberty of the Sons of God, a freedom from the love and ſervice of every ſin. Godlineſs calls for the whole of a man's heart, ſtrength and time, and requires a perſon void of any inconſiſtent obligations; reſolve to break from every way of death, if ever you think to enter into the way of life.

Direct. 3. Thirdly, Make over your ſelves to the Lord in an Everlaſting Covenant; they that will be Maſters of a Trade, muſt firſt be bound to the ſervice of it, and reſign up their perſons, wills, capacities and time to the inſtruction and government of another in order to their fitneſs for ſuch a calling: And ſo muſt ſouls that will learn Wiſdom's Merchandiſe, they muſt bind themſelves to the Trade, and make over themſelves and their all to God in Chriſt, to be taught and enabled to ſet up this excellent work, *Jer.* 50. 5. *They ſhall ask the way to Sion with their faces thitherward, ſaying, Come and let us join our ſelves to the Lord in a perpetual Covenant that cannot be forgotten.* Sin hath made a ſeparation between their God and them, and brought a death upon their mercies and Temple-enjoyments: but now the Spirit of Prophecy breathing on theſe dry bones, moves them to a vital union with the fountain of life, (the onely regular way to their new work and mercies) they muſt firſt be joyned to the Lord, before they can be rejoyned to one another, and re-

enjoy their loſt priviledges; and this union lies in a hearty acceptance of offered grace, a taking hold of God in Chriſt, and a Covenant ſurrender of the whole ſoul and its All to him again: (O for arms to embrace him, ſaith Mr. *Rutherford!*) This is called a giving up of ones ſelf to the Lord, 2 *Corinth.* 8. 5. *But this they did not as we hoped, but firſt gave themſelves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God: They exceeded our hope:* We onely expected ſome part of what was theirs, but they gave themſelves firſt to God, and to us (to be directed and governed by the will of God, to be placed in the fellowſhip of his Goſpel) as well as their intereſts to the ſervice of his people: 'Tis alſo a giving away of ones ſelf to the Lord wholly, unreſervedly and perpetually, to be no more his own, 1 *Cor* 6. 19. *And ye are not your own.* This ſurrender of your ſelves to God (ſouls) muſt be in judgment, underſtandingly, and ariſeth freely on choice; univerſally, without the leaſt reſervation, abſolutely, without any limitation or conditions of our own; eternally, without any expiration and term of this grant, and to be atteſted by all overt acts within your power, *Iſa.* 44. 5. *One ſhall ſay I am the Lord's; another ſhall call himſelf by the name of Jacob; another ſhall ſubſcribe with his hand unto the Lord, and ſurname himſelf by the name of Jacob.* Whatever may moſt fully enſure and expreſs an abſolute devotedneſs unto God, muſt be done by thoſe that ever expect to thrive in grace and godlineſs. *Verſe* 3, 4. *I will pour water upon him that is thirſty, and floods upon the dry ground;*

ground; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thy off-spring, and they shall spring up a among the grass, as willows by the water-courses. When once this implantation into Christ is dispatched, then will the Lord give prosperity to that soul; then are you in a sure way to success in all your holy undertakings, and like to speed well in this Heavenly Trade when you become entirely the Lord's in order to it: O be not satisfied till God be yours. (*The Kings Son or no Husband*, Rutherford.) *The rational soul* (saith *Augustine*) *being capable of God, can be satisfied with nothing but God.*

Direct. 4. Fourthly, Come over into the family of Christ, if you would drive on this Heavenly Trade to purpose: Apprentices are household servants, up-rising, and down-lying; and so must Wisdoms Traders be; they must be members of Christ's family, and dwellers in the house of God. *Psal.* 65. 4. *Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy Courts; we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy Temple.* Those whom God chuses for himself, he brings to himself, and makes them dwellers in his Courts: *Such a one is entered into his family, that he being a sound Believer, may spend his life among the holy Citizens of Heaven.*

In ejus familiam recensitus, ut fide integra inter sanctos cum civibus vitam degat. Buc.

Those whom the Lord takes into Covenant, he takes into communion: not onely with himself, but with his people. *Jer.* 3. 14. 15. *I am married unto you, and I will take you one of a*

City, and two of a Family, and I will bring you unto Sion, and I will give you Paſtors according to my own heart, which ſhall feed you with knowledge and underſtanding: This was intended of Goſpel-times and Churches: *When all the Nations ſhall be gathered to the Name of the Lord to Jeruſalem, verſe* 17. *And the houſe of Judah ſhall walk with the houſe of Iſrael, verſe* 18. which began to be fulfilled upon the breaking down of the partition wall, and the bringing in of the Gentiles unto Chriſt, *Epheſ.* 2. 14, 15, 19. *When Believers ſhould be no more ſtrangers, and foreiners, but fellow-citizens with the Saints, and of the houſhold of God.*

Παροικοι.

The Apoſtle hath reference to the 12th *Verſe*, where ſouls out of Chriſt are ſaid to be aliens from the Common-wealth of *Iſrael*, ſtrangers to the Covenant of Promiſe; but now having acceſs to God by one Spirit, *verſe* 18. Ye are no more ſtrangers and foreiners. (*a*) *In reſpect of the Church of God you are no longer ſtrangers* (ſaith *Zanchy*) *but fellow-citizens with the Saints, and in regard of the Covenant of God, you are no more foreiners, but of the houſhold of God. In whom all the building fitly framed together* (that is, every ſtone in the building) *groweth unto an holy Temple in the Lord, verſe* 21. The Church of God is his Temple where he is rightly ſerved, *Rev.* 7. 15. *Therefore are they before the Throne of God, and ſerve him day and night in his Temple*: which is his Church (ſaith Mr. *Durham*) here begun by fellowſhip in his Ordinances and in

(*a*) *Reſpectu Reipublicæ Iſraelis* (i. e.) *Eccleſiæ concivis ſanctorum: reſpectu fœderis cum Deo eſſe domeſticos Dei.*

Heaven

Heaven compleatly. Ezek. 20. 40. *For in my holy Mountain; in the Mountain of the Height of Iſrael* (a type of Goſpel-Churches) *ſaith the Lord God; there ſhall all the houſe of Iſrael, all of them in the Land, ſerve me; there will I accept them, there will I require your offerings:* Plainly intimating that God hath no acceptable ſervice, but in the Churches of his Saints; I mean as to publick worſhip: Perſons cannot give God his full inſtituted worſhip, till they come into fellowſhip with his people, ſeeing Church-fellowſhip is it ſelf an inſtitution of Chriſt. *Matth.* 28. 19, 20. *Acts* 2. 41, 42. 1 *Cor.* 12. 18. *Mat.* 18. 17, 18, 19. The Church of Chriſt is his Body, where he hath ſet his Members, 1 *Cor.* 12. 18. *That being fitly joyned together, they might increaſe with the increaſe of God, Epheſ.* 4. 16. *Col.* 2. 19. *His Vineyard* where his work lies, and into which he ſends his Labourers, *Iſa.* 5. 7. *Matth.* 20. 1, 2. *His Garden* where his Lillies and Beds of Spices are. *Cant.* 6. 2. *His Family* where he feeds and inſtructs them, where he guides and governs them. 1 *Tim.* 3. 15. *Epheſ.* 3. 15. *His Sanctuary* where he hides and ſecures them. *Pſal.* 78. 69. *His Galleries* where he walks, and is held by his Saints. *Cant.* 7. 5. *His Golden-candleſticks* where his Lamps are burning: *The Firmament and Heaven* where his Stars are ſhining, and the Sun of Righteouſneſs ariſeth with healing in his wings. *Rev.* 2. 1. There's his *Granary* where he laies up his proviſions, his manna, marrow, fat things, and ſpiced wine: *Iſa.* 25. 6. There's *his School* where he inſtructs his Diſciples, and makes them wiſe to ſalvation.

Isa. 54. 13. *All thy Children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children:* There are his *Oracles and Secrets.* Rom. 3. 2. *The Adoption, the Glory, the Covenants, the giving of the Law, and the Service of God, and the Promises,* Rom. 9. 4. There's *his Nursery* where his tender plants are set to grow, where he brings in those that shall be saved. *Acts* 2. 47. *And the Lord added to the Church dayly such as should be saved.* His converting the Gentiles is called a perswading them into the tents of *Shem*, that is the Church of God, *Gen.* 9. 27. Yea the House of God is the gate of Heaven. *Gen.* 28. 17. *This is none other but the House of God; this is the gate of Heaven.* (v) *By the gate of the Church* (saith *Augustine*) *we enter into the gate of Paradise: How goodly then are these Tents of Jacob? How amiable are those Tabernacles of Israel? As the valleys they spread forth, as gardens by the Rivers side, as the trees of Lign-aloes which the Lord hath planted, and as Cedar-trees beside the waters,* Numb. 24. 5, 6. *To your Tents then, O Israel,* 2 Sam. 20. 1. *Fly to your windows O ye Doves,* Isa. 60. 8. *Love the habitation of Gods house, and the place where his honour dwells,* Psal. 26. 8. Where are such pleasures, treasures, light, life: where are your chiefest interests, your priviledges, your work, your Lord, the first-fruits of your eternal glory? if you have taken Christ for your Teacher, you must take his Church for your School; you must dwell where he dwells, where you may sit at his feet, and receive his Doctrine.

(v) *Per portas Ecclesiæ in portam Paradisi.*

Direct.

Direct. 5. Fifthly, Be mortified to this present world; get your hearts loose from things below. *No man that warreth (a) entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him that hath chosen him to be a souldier*, 2 *Tim.* 2.4. He does not lay ties and snares about his feet, which throw him down, and hinder the course he engages to follow. Christianity is a Warfare, and Race; earthly things in the heart are as entanglements about the feet, which hinder this undertaking; you will have no liberty to heavenly things, till redeemed from the Earth; nor can run the race towards glory, till *you lay aside the weights that press you down, and the sin that doth so easily beset you*, *Heb.* 12.1. If you will set your affections on things above, you must first *take them off from things beneath*, *Col.* 3.2. He that sets his face towards Heaven, must turn his back upon the world, *Phil*, 3. 13. *Forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forth unto those things that are before:* The World is one of those things Christians must leave behind them, if ever they think to reach Heaven, (*b*) *We should* (saith *Luther*) *with a certain greatness of mind contemn this life, and world, and with a large heart breath after the future glory of an Eternal Life.* Till you are brought to a contempt of this world, and can count it as dross and dung, you can never value Heaven, or pursue things above with an even and uninter-

(*a*) Ἐμπλέκεται, tricis & laqueis implicatur (*b*) *Debebamus magno animo contemnere vitam & mundum & pleno pectore anhelare ad futuram gloriam æternæ vitæ.* Luther. in Gen.

rupted heart. That ſoul which deſigns to make Religion its works, muſt be ready to attend it at all times, and to have the heart compoſed and fitted to all the inſtructions that lead to it, which an earthly heart cannot do: A light and mutable ſpirit, now for God, and then for the world, is unfit for this great employment. *He that puts his hand to the plough, and looks back, is unmeet for the Kingdom of God*, Luke 9. 62. And ſuch is a heart under the command of earthly things; 'tis never ſtedfaſt with God: the things of this world fill the ſoul with wind, and make it light and trifling about the things of God: *The heart of man is like that Jewel* (I have read of) *that one gave to* Alexander, *that while it was kept bright, weighed down the choiceſt gold, and moſt precious ſtones; but if once it fell into the duſt, and took ruſt, it was lighter than a feather*: And ſo is the heart, if it falls into the duſty things of this world. The Church cloathed with the Sun, hath the Moon under her feet, *Rev.* 12. 1. The more a ſoul is filled with the pure knowledge of God, and ſhining in its converſation, the more it is lifted up above the world: The nearer Heaven, the farther from Earth. *The more ſeparate from the world* (ſaies Mr. *Greenhill* on *Ezek.* 3. 23.) *the more fit for communion with God*: *Ezekiel muſt leave his houſe, and go into the plain, and there the Lord will talk with him*. The King's daughter muſt forget her own people, and her Father's houſe, ere the King would greatly deſire her beauty, *Pſal.* 45. 10, 11. And *Abraham* muſt leave his Countrey, and pleaſant habitation, before he could get into a way

of

of frequent communion with God; and so must a soul in heart and affections sit loose from the ensnaring things of this world, if ever he thinks to drive this Heavenly Trade. (c) *By so much the more* (saith *Augustine*) *doth any one cleave to God, as he ceases from loving his own interests.*

Direct. 6. You must resolve on this also, To submit to all the instructions the Lord Jesus gives you; to go thorough all the labours, and bear all the burdens that this Heavenly Trade calls you to; every Art and Calling have their principles and rules, by the knowledge and obedience of which they are attain'd to; and so hath Religion: And as Piety is the highest and noblest profession; so are its principles more pure and mysterious, and with greatest difficulty attainable. Acquired knowledge furnishes men with light sufficient for all earthly undertakings; but to this Heavenly Trade both infused and acquired understanding is needful: both rules, and an eye to discern them must be given, if ever this Art be obtained: For this end the Lord Jesus is given, for *a light of the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes*, that they may see, *Isa.* 42. 6, 7. and for a *Prophet*, to teach and instruct them the way they should go: and to hear and obey him as such, is the absolute duty of all that have given themselves up to his conduct and government, *Acts* 3. 22. *A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren like unto me, him shall you hear in all*

(c) *Tantomagis adhæret Deo quilibet quanto minus diligit proprium.*

things

things whatsoever he shall say unto you. He hath undertaken to inwise them that obey him, and to shew them what they must do, *Acts* 9. 6. And if they go on to know, they shall know the Lord: if they sit at his feet, and hear his Word, *Deut.* 33. 3. he will shipe out to them, and send out *a fiery Law* for them: In order to which instruction your duty is to hear him, to watch daily at his gates, and to wait at the posts of his house, *Prov.* 8. 34. when he calls, say with *Samuel*, *Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth*, 1 *Sam.* 3. 10. *And whatsoever he saith* (said the Mother of our Lord) *unto you, do it*, *Joh.* 2. 5. Slight no directions, stick at no difficulties in comporting with his pleasure, 'tis for the life of your souls; obedience is so necessary in the Disciples of Christ, as that without it no true knowledge can be attained here, *Joh.* 7. 17. (*if any man doth his will he shall know the Doctrine*) nor salvation hereafter, *Heb.* 5. 9. (*he became the Authour of eternal salvation to all them that obey him:*) *His yoake is easie, and his burden is light*, *Prov.* 8. 5, 6. *Prov.* 3. 17. He enjoyns you nothing but what is needful, profitable, excellent, and pleasant: *Hear and your souls shall live*, *Isa.* 53. 3. Shall the servants of men come, go, do this or that, when they are bidden? *Matt.* 8. 8. Yea, shall the Devil's slaves do the greatest drudgeries, run most desperate adventures; throw themselves from pinacles; yea damn their souls at his bidding? and the servants of Christ so disobedient (when 'tis for their own concerns, their mercies and advantages are wrapt up in it) and that to so rational and easie in-

junctions? The consideration of this prevailed with a Heathen to obedience, when against his inclination. 2 *King.* 5. 13. *His servants came near and said; My Father, if the Prophet had bid thee do some great thing, would'st thou not have done it?* (seeing it is for thy life and health) *how much rather then when he saith to thee, wash and be clean?* If his commands seem grievous, let love sweeten them: If his yoke seem heavy, let his rest at the end of it render it easie: when duties seem burdensom to flesh and blood, his burdens heavy, losses for the Gospel's sake great, think thus; better smart once than ever; to undergo troubles in the way, than at the end; to have my bad things here, rather than be tormented hereafter, *Luke* 16. 25. and what pains and hardships will men undergo for gold that perisheth, 1 *Pet.* 1. 7. yea for counters that cheat them; and shall not I for an inheritance that fadeth not, reserved in Heaven, 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. What strivings have some to obtain a Crown that is corruptible; and shall I be weary that am in pursuit of one that is incorruptible? 1 *Cor.* 9. 25. without labour, no rest; without bearing the heat and burden of the day (when called thereto) no peuny at the end, *Matt.* 20. 12, 13. without striving lawfully, no crowning, 2 *Tim.* 2. 5. without doing the commandment, no eating of the tree of life, *Rev.* 22. 14. without enduring to the end, no salvation, *Mark* 13. 13. comfort your selves with this, that *Heaven will make amends for all*; when your wet and weary sowings shall end in a pleasant and eternal harvest. *Gal.* 16. 9. *Let us not be weary in well doing*

doing, for you ſhall reap in due time, if ye faint not: Be ſtedfaſt, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, foraſmuch as you know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord, 1 *Cor.* 15. 58.

Direct. 7. Laſtly, What you do, do quickly, time waits not your leiſure. There are but twelve hours in the day, and how many of them have been ſlept and ſinned away, and how few of them may be before you, who knows? What if your Sun ſhould ſet at noon day? or a ſummons meet you in the midſt of your work: *Give account of thy Stewardſhip, for thou ſhalt be no longer Steward, Luke* 16. 2. What will you then do? Some of you are in your afternoon, and what time is that to ſet forth ſuch a long journey as the way to Heaven is? and yet will you gain (by your delays) ſome of this time alſo, for the Devil, World and Fleſh? others of you are in your morning, (the beſt time to put forth in your travel towards glory:) O! loſe not your ſeaſon for eternity: *Make much of time*, (ſaith *Aquinas*) *eſpecially in the weighty matter of Salvation: O! how much would they that now lie frying in Hell, rejoyce, if they might have the leaſt minute of time wherein they might get Gods favour: the young man hath death at his back, the old man before his eyes, and that's the more dangerous enemy that purſues thee, than that which marches up to thy face:* Chriſt's work admits of no delays, his injunction allows not of to morrow, but while 'tis called to day: *Heb.* 3. 7. *To day if you will hear his voice*, verſ. 13. *To day, leſt any of you be hardned through the deceitfulneſs*

of

of sin: Seek the Lord while he may be found, Isa. 55. 6. (Haste, haste, the tide will not bide, *Rutherford.*) 'Tis now or never, while the Light shines, the Lord knocks, the Angel moves on the waters, while the Lord delays his coming: Salvation-work is quick work, God's racers must run, his Doves must fly, his Servants be diligent, that they may be found of him in peace, 1 *Cor.* 9. 26. *Isa.* 60. 8. 2 *Pet.* 3. 14. You that have stood idle in the market-place all your day hitherto, hasten into the Lord's Vineyard, *Matt.* 20. 6. (Love is sick to hear tell of to morrow, *Mr. Rutherford*) What *Jonathan* said to his Lad when *David's* life was in danger, let me advise you: *And* Jonathan *cried after the Lad, make speed, haste, stay not,* 1 *Sam.* 20. 38. *I rue nothing* (said precious Mr. *Welch* when on his sick-bed) *but that I was so long in beginning: O,* said *David, that I had wings like a Dove, for then would I fly away, and be at rest: I would hasten my escape from the stormy wind and Tempest, Psal.* 55. 6, 8. Sinners, you are in danger of stormy tempests while in your unchanged state: *O hasten to your strong holds ye prisoners of hope.* When *Brentius* was like to be given up to the enemy, one writes him this note; *Fuge* Brenti *cito citius citissime: Fly* Brentius *quickly, more quickly, most speedily.* Souls, 'tis for your lives, make all possible haste about the work of your Salvation: And you that are entred on this heavenly work, double your diligence that you may finish your course before God finishes your time: methinks the word

The fulfilling of the Scriptures.

word of God, and his providences this day; yea, every thing seems to thrust you forward, and do to you as *Pharaoh*'s Task-masters did to *Israel*: *Exod.* 5. 13. *And the Task-masters hasted them, saying, fulfil your work.*

To Professors.

Counsel 2. Secondly, If the Heavenly Trade be the best Trade; then you that profess this Calling, be you exhorted to follow it; keep up and improve your Trade for Heaven: what's an employment without improvement? the most profitable Calling not followed, turns to little advantage: The day we live in gives men sensible experience of this truth, that they who intend to live in the World, must attend their employments: The idle person suffers hunger: they must be careful and diligent in their business, that think to make any thing of their earthly interests: and so 'tis in this Trade of godliness; they that will be saved, must *work out their Salvation*. A Trade is a man's business, and course of life, which he pursues and carries on from day to day; 'tis the subject of his thoughts, counsels, and considerations: of his time and strength, and daily work: where he ends one day, he begins the next, and contributes his utmost wisdom, parts and labours to the most vigorous prosecution of it: And so must it be in this Heavenly Trade, (Christians,) it must be the impending business, and principal concern of your whole life: that which commands your thoughts, purposes and capacities:

which

which engrosses your time, care and strength, and to which every other business must give way, and every occasion and occurence must be subservient: it must be followed, and driven on every day, in every thing, place and company: whatever is neglected, that must go on, and give no place to intermissions, no, not for a moment; You must not say to godliness, as *Felix* did to *Paul*; *Go thy way for this time, when I have a more convenient season I will send for thee*, *Acts* 24. 25. Stops in the way of God are not easily recovered: one days neglect brings all out of order: Prosperity in Religion admits of no *Parenthesis* in its work, or consists with allowed interruptions: Piety must be as the blood that runs through every vein of your life, and affair in the World: In eating, drinking, talking, thinking, buying, selling, you must be still driving on Wisdom's Merchandise. Christians, follow your work, or lay down your Trade; 'tis vanity, yea, the way to beggery, to profess a Calling, and not pursue it.

Quest. *But wherein lies this Heavenly Trade, which I must so make my business? what do you drive at by all these Arguments for Heavenly Trading?*

What I intend by this metaphor, I shall open to you under these seven general Heads, as the main duty of a Christian, and to be carried on in the whole course of his life.

1. To have and keep up a heavenly spirit.
2. To secure your interest in heavenly things.

3. To

3 To get in more and more of heavenly Goods.

4 Every day to drive on heavenly work.

5 To be heavenly in your thoughts and meditations daily.

6 To keep up heavenly converses every day.

7 To improve every thing you have, meet with, and do, to heavenly ends and advantages.

First, If you will drive on this heavenly Trade, you must have and maintain a heavenly spirit; this is the spring of all heavenly actions; as is a man's spirit, so will his thoughts, words and conversation be; look what way the spirit of a man goes, that way the man goes: *They that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh; and they that are after the spirit, the things of the spirit*; That is, they that are *altogether* (a) *led by their carnal affections*, (saith *Willet*) *following the ducture of the flesh*, (saith *Paræus*,) who are govern'd by a carnal spirit, they mind and pursue carnal things; and they that are after the spirit, who are under the rule and government (b) of the spirit, who are spiritually minded, these do savour and make after spiritual things. What the Prophet *Ezekiel* speaks of the motion of second causes according to the direction and influence of the first cause. *Ezek.* 1. 20. *Withersoever the spirit was to go, they went*; (that is the wheels,) *for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels*: The same may be said of the actions of men, that they

a) *Carnis ductum sequentes.* (b) *Ad se spiritui regendos cedunt.* Paræ.

are

are according to the motion of that ruling spirit that is in them: *they that live in the Spirit, walk in the spirit, Gal.* 5. 25. *Caleb's* following after God, was the fruit of that other spirit he received, Numb. 14. 24. 'Tis said of those that builded the house of God, *Ezra* 1. 5. that God had raised up their spirits to the work, as birds stir up their young to fly. *Then rose up the chief of the Fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the Priests and Levites, with all those whose spirit God had raised up, to go up to build the House of the Lord which is in Jerusalem.* They that set about the work of Religion, must be persons of raised spirits, capable of ascending to things above. The reason why no more do set upon this Heavenly Trade, is, because they want this heavenly spirit, their spirit is earthly, and that (as leaven) seasons their whole souls, and makes their conversations earthly. 'Tis contrary to nature, for a carnal mind to savour spiritual things; *Such are not subject to the Spirit of God, neither indeed can be, Rom.* 8. 7. 'Tis as natural, for the stone to ascend, and waters to run back as for an earthly heart to love and pursue heavenly things. A heavenly spirit sutes heavenly things, and does as naturally incline the soul to things above, as the fire moves upward, and the water carries all that is in it to the Ocean. A heavenly spirit savours heavenly things, and stirs up heavenly desires and motions to divine things. A heavenly spirit conveys out heavenly influences and strength to the soul, and is as good blood and spirits that strengthen the body. A heavenly spirit is influenced by heavenly

arguments, and prevailed with by heavenly motives taken from the love of God, the excellency of Christ, the suitableness and advantage of spiritual things to the nature of the Soul, the pleasing and glorifying of God; all which signifies nothing to an earthly and carnal heart, which onely understands, favours, and is acted by carnal reasons and considerations. It is therefore a principal part of a Christians business in this *Heavenly Trade*, (and that which is leading to all other duties) to take heed to his spirit, *Mal.* 2. 15. to get and keep that pure and heavenly. If the fountain be corrupt, the streams cannot be good: Get your minds beam'd over with heavenly light, to discern heavenly things, their nature and worth; this *Paul* begs for the Saints at *Ephesus*, *Eph.* 1. 17, 18. *That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightned, that you may know what is the hope of his Calling, and what is the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the Saints.* There are great hopes and glorious riches made over to Believers in the Gospel, the knowledge of which is necessary to chear the heart, and engage the soul with all its strength to make out after them. *One thought of Christ* (saith Mr. *Ball*) *reaching the heart, is more worth than all Creatures contentments whatsoever, though they should be enjoyed in their fulness for a thousand years without interruption.* Does this keep alive the Apostles hearts, under the dyings of the Lord Jesus in their bodies, and fill'd them

with such courage & joy, that they had an eye to see glorious and eternal things. 2 *Cor.* 10. 13. 16. 18. *While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.* And this was their great work by the Gospel, *to make men see what is the fellowship of the mystery which from the beginning of the World was hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ,* Eph. 3. 9. And having got this spiritual eye, a Christian's duty is to keep it open, and fixt on things above, to preserve it from the injury of Sin and Satan, to take heed of the vapours of a carnal heart, and the dusty motes of this lower World, that they fall not in and weaken this light: to get eye-salve from Christ, and pure anointings of the spirit on it every day, that they may see things invisible, and those great things of the other World they are engaged about: The most discerning eye on this side the everlasting Hills sees but darkly through a glass, and knows but in part, 1 *Cor.* 13. 9, 12. How carnal are the minds of most Christians in this World? the very Disciples (though their eyes were blessed with peculiar sights, *Mat.* 13. 16. yet had carnal apprehensions of spiritual things, even after the Lord Jesus had spent all his pains about them. *Acts* 1. 6. *Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the Kingdom unto Israel?* knowing souls have sometimes *their eyes held that they cannot see Jesus Luke* 24. 16. nor bear discoveries of his glorious truth, *Joh.* 16. 12. that the Lord Jesus may say to all in this life; *O fools, and slow*

of heart to believe, Luke 24. 28. David, after he had been long a learner, yea, after he was wiser than his teachers, yet cries out for more light. Psal. 143. 8. Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk. Psal. 119. 18. Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy Law. We may sail here (saith Mr. Hooker in daily search, and when we know Hooker on there is something still beyond our 17 of John knowledge, as men that travel in the main Ocean, they see nothing but water, and yet see neither side nor shore, brim nor bottom, and there is more water to be seen. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in Christ, and he keeps the keys in his own hand or bosome. Be often looking unto Jesus for clearer sights of him, and the things freely given of God, with the way to them. Knock often at the treasury-door, till he answer and open, and send you away enriched with the knowledge of him: this is part of your Trade, to know Goods, and the worth of them, and how to buy and sell to best advantage. Alas, to what purpose is it to deal in Commodities that men know not? and heavenly things are hidden things, beyond the search of Men and Angels. 1 Pet. 1. 12. Which things the Angels desire to look into; (*) They bowed and stooped down to pry into those hidden secrets, and as it were to peep into the mysteries of the Gospel; as the word signifies; to look a-squint with crafty eyes, every way, and with quicked observance.

(*) παρακυψαι. amis oculis vel in transitu, & quasi per transennam aspicere. Bud.

as through a Casement at one that passeth by; and this they did with an earnest and restless (y) desire. The Apostle alludes to the Cherubims placed over the Mercy seat, with their faces looking towards the Mercy-seat, and through it to the Ark (a Type of Christ and Gospel-mysteries) *Exod.* 25. 20. as things worthy, and yet hard to be known, which call for an inward and spiritual eye under fresh anointings every day. Christians, this is your daily work, to follow on to know the Lord; to be much with the Son of Righteousness for healings and beamings on the eye of your mind, that you may be more capable to understand the whole counsel of God concerning you. This is a Heavenly Spirit, or Mind enlightened with Heavenly Wisdom to eye and understand heavenly spiritual things.

Another property of a Heavenly Spirit is this, 'Tis a Spirit that savours as well as sees heavenly things; it tasts a sweetness in Divine things: there is nothing in all the world that so pleases a spiritual mind, as spiritual things. So much is included in that word, Rom. 8. 5. *Do (z) mind the things of the flesh*; that is to savour and relish them: so 'tis rendred, *Matth.* 16. 23. *For thou savourest not the things that be of God:* It includes the Affections as well as the Understanding. A heavenly spirit takes delight in heavenly things, & is an active principle that carries out the Soul after God and things eternal: And that's your work too, to get and maintain a delight in God, and Divine things; to cherish breathings after heavenly things, and preserve

(y) [illegible]

your spiritual senses in exercise, that your souls may be ever quick in seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling and feeling, the joyes and pleasures that are in things above: By this means Religion will be delirable, Christ's yoke easie, and his waies pleasant, and his commands not grievous. This is one of the most difficult pieces of Christianity, to maintain the inward principle and spring of holy actions pure and lively: 'Tis far easier to set on any external duty, than to keep the heart in a fit active frame for God, which is apt to languish and grow out of order every moment, if not kept and maintained by continued supplies from above. *Prov.* 4. 23. *Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of Life.* Now if you would keep up a heavenly Spirit.

First. Beware of those things that weaken it: A Heavenly Spirit is a very tender thing, and must be chiefly kept, or will soon suffer loss; 'tis like the apple of the eye, that is liable to injury from every dust or stroak that comes nigh it; or like a Venice-glass, that is down and broken with every little touch. You cannot be too choice and tender in watching and guarding this Spirit from every thing that is contrary to it.

Take heed of carnal lusts, these stand between God and the soul, and these resist the Spirit, *Gal.* 5, 17. and fight against the soul. 1. *Pet.* 2. 11. *Dearly Beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, that war against the soul.* Water is as consistent with fire, sickness with health, death with life, as unmortified lusts

lusts with a heavenly spirit; and you may as safely dwell with thiefs and bloody murderers, as suffer fleshly lusts to harbour near your hearts: These suffered to hover in the soul, will devour your sacrifice; and like water, quench this sacred fire: and with the Ivy, eat out the nourishment of this heaven-born spirit. When *Alexander* asked *Diogenes* what he would desire of him; that you (saith he) would stand aside a little from between me and the warm Sun: so a soul that knows what the views of God are, will desire nothing more than the remove of what stands between him and the warming sight of this heavenly Sun. Carnal lusts are as venemous breath, that soon seize on, and weaken the vitals of godliness: Never expect peace or welfare to the spiritual seed, till the bond-woman and her Son be cast out. How soon have excellent frames been all lost, and the candle of the Lord well-nigh put out by these filthy damps that ascend from the deeps of unclean and unmortified affections. This wrought such changes in *Israel*; now they sang his praises, and then presently forgat his works, *Psal.* 106. 12, Those divine raptures could not abide, and what was the cause? why 'twas unmortified lusts that had dominion over them. *V.* 14. *They lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the Desart, and he gave them their request, but sent leanness into their souls.* This soon brought the Jews from being conquerours, to captives, that they did not pursue their victories, and drive out the *Canaanites* out of the valleys, as well as the mountains, *Judg.* 1. 19.

ch. 2, 3. This want of mortification in Believers is the cause that their corruption do so often give check to their graces, and make their choice heavenly frames so short liv'd and mutable. [O cursed pleasures! O damnable ease bought with the loss of God! *Rutherford.*] O Christians! guard your spirit from those filthy and fleshly lusts, as Physicians do fortifie the spirits against malignant vapours, if ever you will maintain a gracious and heavenly Spirit.

Earthly things also admitted too near the heart, prove the bane of a heavenly spirit; these, like a stone at the bird's leg, pluck it down when it attempts to be upon the wing. Worldly affections, when they exceed their bounds, are like waters that overflow the banks; they carry down all heavenly motions before them. Earthly things are the Devils lure to professing Christians, which draw down their lofty meditations, when they are in chase of things above; as the Fowler allures down the towring Lark when hovering aloft in the gentle air. The Devil deals with earthly men, as Naturalists say men do with Bees; *when they swarm and are flying away, they throw up dust, and they scatter again*: So doth Satan when their thoughts are up upon heavenly things, he casts in the dusty thoughts of this world, and they scatter them again. *Demas hath forsaken us, having loved this present world*, 2 Tim. 4. 10. Earthly things draw away the heart from God, his work and interest: How often do these interrupt, if not countermand the most serious thoughts of gracious souls? and where they

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cannot as a Master command, they will as neighbours be often coming in, and hinder the soul in its most weighty business, if the door be not lockt against their unseasonable visits. Worldly lusts must be denied, as well as ungodliness, by those that intend to live righteously, soberly and godly in this present world, *Tit. cap. 2. v. 11, 12.* Earthly things are good servants, but bad Masters; useful in their place; as fire in the hearth is profitable, but in the thatch dangerous; and as unruly Servants, and untamed Colts are serviceable when reduced to their place, and kept under government. Worldly thoughts are as some roots that must be often trod down, or they will spill up and seed in our hearts. Christians, have a special strong guard against the encroachments of your earthly affairs, if ever you will secure the thrivings of a heavenly spirit.

Take heed also of grieving the Spirit of Grace, which maintains and relieves this heaveuly spirit. As the spring is to the streams; so is the holy Spirit to this heavenly spirit in Believers, that feeds and supplies it from his own nature: Now to grieve this Spirit, is to provoke him to withhold his gracious communications to the soul. *Ephes. 4. 30. And grieve not the holy Spirit of God whereby you are sealed to the day of redemption.* Which implies, that this Spirit of Grace being grieved, suspends its comforting sealing influences towards the souls of Believers. This Scripture is taken from *Isa. 63. 10. But* וְעִצְּבוּ *they rebelled and vexed his holy Spirit, therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought*

fought against them: They grieved his Spirit, as the word signifies; and this broke that amicable accord between the Spirit and them, that he became their enemy, and cut off all succours from them; yea, comes forth against them: And that which grieved the Spirit of God, was, the abuse of its kindness, Verse 9. *In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the Angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.* Nothing does more grieve the Spirit of God, than the abuse of his kindness and tender mercy to his people; when the Lord hath been opening the bowels of his pity to Souls in saving and redeeming mercy, and hath been shedding abroad his love upon them, bearing with, and carrying of them for a long time; and all this is slighted and contemned, and the Soul takes no notice of all this Grace, but still perseverers in its evil course; this grieves the Spirit, and causeth him to withhold his tender mercy, and quickening influence from the Soul, and it becomes *weak as water, and withers in all the leaves of her spring*, Ezek. 47. 19. Psa. 104. 29. As the member languishes when it can no longer receive influences from the head: and the branch withers when the root communicates no sap to it: So is it with the Soul when the Spirit ceases from all its gracious communications, as it does when grieved by those he loves and labours with; not as if the Divine Spirit could be capable of passions and perturbations, as creatures are: But then may the holy Spirit be said to be grieved, when gracious Souls do that which

which is enough to grieve one that tenderly affects us, and by all means seeks our eternal good. Now two things usually grieve such a one: First, Injuries from a friend. Secondly, The sufferings of a friend. Unkindness from those we love, does usually sit nearer our hearts, than any injuries from strangers or enemies: we usually expect more regard from such, and therefore are more troubled at disappointments: And such is the tenderness of the Spirits to Believers, that want of love, or injury from such is more abusive, and carries in it all that which in its nature is grieving. Again, we usually grieve at the evils of those we love; and such are the sins of Believers, they are injurious to themselves, and enemies to their own Souls: This the Spirit of God sees that gracious Souls, by their carnal affections, and sensual passions, by their corrupt communications, and fleshly lusts, do not onely resist him, and frustrate his work in them; but these also injure and endanger their own Souls: by these they lose many a mercy, and draw upon them many afflictions and fatherly displeasure from God against them; and this grieves the Spirit to see, and this removes his presence, and hinders his comforting, quickening operations, by reason of which their spirits fail, and become cold and weak to every heavenly action. Your work Christians is to be tender of the Spirit, to take heed you be not unkind to his person, that you do not undervalue his gracious communications, or resist his internal operations. Take heed of unthankfulness for his kindnesses, of

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slighting his counsels, of unsuitable walking to his rules and mercies, if you would not grieve him, and so deprive your selves of his quickening influences on your spirits. That's the first: Beware of those things that weaken this heavenly Spirit.

Secondly, If you would maintain a Heavenly Spirit; get all the nourishment you can for it. As the body is nourished by food, and the animal spirits by contributions of joy and contentment; so is this Heavenly Spirit by all the means and helps God hath appointed to this end, 1 *Tim.* iv. 6. ἐντρεφόμενος. *nourished up in the word of faith, and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.* The Word and Ordinances are to the inner-man, as nourishing food to the outward, which strengthens the spiritual part, and maintains its vigour and activity. *Timothy had imbibed the Doctrine of the Gospel together with his milk* (saith *Calvin*) *and had made continual progresses in the same to that day, which did so greatly strengthen and nourish him in his faith and graces.* The word of God is suited, sent and commissioned to the service and advantage of your graces 'tis the way by which the Lord Jesus maintains and encreases spiritual life and growth in the new-born soul. 1 *Pet.* ii. 2. *As new born babes desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby.* Attend upon all the Ordinances of God, where they are purely and powerfully administred. Be much in reading the Scriptures, and such helps as the Lord gives you for your instruction and quickening. 1 *Tim.* iv. 13. *Give attendance to reading, to exhorta-*

hortation, to doctrine; meditate upon these things; give thy selfe wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all. V. 15. (a) *Be thou in them:* as the words are; that is, exercise thy self with these continually, constantly, and with all thy might; let not a day pass without reading, meditation, and secret prayer, that the inner-man may have all the recruits that are needful and (b) appointed for its strengthening. Your bodies can better want their appointed food, than your souls their daily bread: The want of constant feeding, and sound digestion of spiritual provisions, is one cause of that soul-leanness, and spiritual languishing that abounds every where this day.

Thirdly, If you will keep up a Heavenly Spirit; be much in communion with the Father of Spirits. Fellowship with God puts a stamp of Heaven upon the soul, and leaves an impress of the Divine Nature on it. 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. *But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord.* Views of God, though but through the glass of Ordinances, have an assimulating virtue, and do transfrom the mind into his own likeness. When *Moses* was taken up into a nearness to God, he gets some abiding beams of his glory upon him, and comes of with divine shines on his countenance, *Exod.* 34. 35. When the Lord Je-

(a) ἐν τούτοις ἴσθι, *Ut sic te exerceto jugiter constanter vehementer.* Buc. (b) Whilest thou dost not follow the directing light of the Spirit, thou shalt never have the quickening, cherishing beams of it. *Culver.*

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sus was got on to a high Mountain apart, and had more than fellowship with Heaven, 'tis said; He was *transfigured, and his face did shine*. Nearness to God does wonderfully warm and quicken the heart, as approaches of the Sun do the body. *With thee is the fountain of life; in thy light shall we see light*, Psal. 36. 9. As the being of spiritual Life lies in union with God in Christ by Faith; so it's well-being maintained by communion with him in the Spirit, who supplies the Soul with quickenings, as the Fountain doth the Vessel that's put under it, with waters: God is in himself the Essential Life, and to his people the fountain of Life. (c) *Thou Lord* (saith one) *art life by thy Essence, and the fountain of life by communion; from thee all life flows out, and runs down unto us daily.* In fellowship the Lord Jesus lets out himself, Love and Spirit, and this attracts the heart after God, and strengthens the Souls motions after him. *Every act of fellowship with Christ here* (saith Mr. *Reyner*) *is a step Heaven-ward:* By it the heart is raised after God, sweetly refreshed and strengthened with spiritual strength. *To live in fellowship with God* (says the same Author) *is to live at the highest rate under Heaven, next to Heaven; yea as in a corner of Heaven, to live in the highest Region of Christianity,—'tis the Life of Paradise, an Evangelical, yea Angelical and Celestial Life, in comparison whereof the most men and women are dead.* Communion with God does wonderfully

(c) *Tu Domine es vita per essentiam & fons vitæ per communionem, a te omnis vita effluit ac incessanter profluit.* Jo. Paul. Palant.

nourish

nourish the Heavenly Spirit, and fatten the spiritual part of Believers: *Smith* (saith *Reyner*) *eat honey-comb, eat fat things full of marrow, and drink wine on the lees well refined, spiced wine.* O Christians; press after nearness to God in Ordinances and Duties; rest not in highest privileges without spiritual converse with God in them, and communications of his Love and Life through them.

Fourthly, Cherish heavenly motions in your hearts, and be tender of all the breathings of the Spirit upon you. It may be the Lord comes in upon the heart with some Spiritual Light or Life, in a Sermon, or in a Duty, or when alone, stirring up thy desires, and warming thy affections, making some offers of grace, and help to thy dull and languishing soul; take heed now how thou slightest or stiflest these: this is one step to the quenching of the Spirit, and impeding its gracious assistance, and vital operations on thy soul: 1 *Thes.* 5. *ver.* 19. *Quench not the Spirit.* He that will kindle a fire, gathers up every little coal, and makes the most of the least spark. The shavings of gold are gold, and the smallest breathings of the Spirit are to be highly prized: He that checks the first motions of the Spirit, may never meet with the second: and he that slights the least gifts of grace, may forever miss of its larger doles. O to what a height might grace come in thy soul, if every stirring of it were improved! God despises not the day of thy small things; how unreasonable is it thou should'st overlook his? The Lord Jesus (Christians) doth nourish and cherish the least good

good that is in you *Ephes.* 3. 29. O be tender of whatever communications come from him to you! This will abundantly help on the enlivenings and enlargements of this Heavenly Spirit.

Fifthly, Dwell much in the meditation of Heaven; this will heavenlize your spirit: Twas this made the Apostles persons of such heavenly spirits; they did often look to things above, 1 *Cor.* 4. 18. *While we look not on the things which are seen, but on the things which are not seen.* No affliction could discourage them from owning and professing Christ; nor earthly comforts allure their desires and delights from Christ; and that which so strongly guarded their hearts from either of these dangers, was a firm perswasion of an interest in future glory, and a diligent observing eye upon this glory: a levelling look at this mark does wonderfully raise the heart towards it, and put in a new spirit and life into the soul, strongly engaging all its attempts towards the enjoyment of it: Frequent contemplations of Heaven do much wean the heart from this Earth. If thou remembrest thou art not of this world, earthly things shall nicely be admitted into the Court of the Temple, not into the heart, which is the Holy of Holies, *Burg.* on 17. *Joh.* How contemptibly did those Worthies of old look on this world, when once they got sights of Heaven! *Heb.* 11. They counted themselves strangers and pilgrims on the Earth; were not mindful of their own Country; went out from it; would no more return to it; sought

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an heavenly Countrey; were perſwaded of thoſe great and glorious things above, and embraced them; laid hold of them by faith: and made after them: and that which did ſo powerfully work over their ſpirits to theſe things above, was their believing ſights of them. *V.* 13. *Theſe all dyed in the faith, not having received the promiſes, but having ſeen them afar off*; that is, *the things promiſed, (viz.) heavenly things*, of which *Canaan* was a type. So (*a*) *Paraeus* refers the participles here to the things ſignified of the promiſe, that heavenly Country which they only deſired. *Things neareſt Heaven* (ſaith one) *take leaſt care of the Earth: The Fowls of the Air neither plow nor ſow.* The glory of the world ſeems little to one that dwells much on the believing views of Heaven. 'Tis ſaid of *Fulgentius*, *That when he beheld the ſplendour and joy of* Rome, *the glory of the* Roman *Nobility, the triumphant pomp of King* Theodorick, *he was ſo far from being taken with it, that it raiſed up his deſires after heavenly joys the more, ſaying, How beautiful may the Cœleſtical* Jeruſalem *be, when teriſtical* Rome *ſo glittereth! If ſuch honour be given to lovers of vanity, what glory ſhall be imparted to the Saints, who are lovers and followers of truth!* Serious thoughts of Heaven will inflame the deſires after it: *Our Converſation is in Heaven* (ſaith *Paul*) *whence alſo we look for the Saviour, who ſhall change our vile bodies into the likeneſs of his glorious body. Phil.* 3. 20. We wait, hope for, and expect Heaven,

(*a*) *Tria participia refero ad promiſſionis rem ſignificatam Patriam Cœleſtem quam unice deſiderabant.*

to be where this bleſſed Countrey is; the breadth and length of which we now look into by faith. If your thoughts be much on Heaven, your longings will be much for Heaven. I have read of one being in his journey towards *Jeruſalem*, thought he ſaw famous Cities in his way, and met with many friendly entertainments; yet would often ſay, *I muſt not ſtay here this is not* Jeruſalem: So will thy heart ſay (if thou converſeſt much in Heaven now) when thou meeteſt with the moſt deſirable comforts of this life; yet this is not Heaven; my affections muſt not ſtay here. Allow time every day to take ſome turns in the upper world, and to get thy heart held in the galleries above; where are the ſweeteſt delicacies, and moſt delighting views to take thy heart, and ſublimate thy affections to thoſe pure and eternal things?

Sixthly, If you would keep up a Heavenly Spirit; be much exerciſed in heavenly actions; As is mens employments they are moſtly verſed about, ſo uſually is their ſpirit: Actions ſtrengthen habits: Men that are much taken up about earthly things, are earthly-minded; their ſpirits being tinctured with the things they have much to do with: Such are heavenly actions to gracious ſouls; they draw forth and exerciſe their graces: uſe makes men ready, and adapts their ſpirits to their work. The Apoſtle makes this an evidence of ſtrength in grace, that ſuch are much in the exerciſe of it. *Heb.* 5. 14. *Strong meat belongeth to them who are of full age; even thoſe who by reaſon of uſe have their ſenſes exerciſed to diſcern both good and evil.*

evil. The more you are conversant about holy things, the stronger will be the bent of your spirit to them; the more facile and pleasant will Religion be, and the indisposition of your spirit to it more abated. *Prov.* 10. 29. *The way of the Lord is strength to the upright.* The more you walk in it, the less weary will you be; the more pleasure will you find in it, and the more propense will your spirit be to it. This is the first work in Wisdom's Merchandise; to get and keep up a Heavenly Spirit.

Secondly, Another piece of your Heavenly Trade is, to secure your interest in heavenly things. This is part of mens business in the world, to secure their interest in the things they have: they mark their goods, and brand their cattle, and set their names on the things they have, that their interest in them might be known: And this is the great concern of Wisdom's Merchants also, to make good their claim to, and prove their propriety in the things of Heaven and Glory: These are worth the securing, being things of infinite moment, and eternal duration; other things are not. O what folly is it to strive for shadows, and lose the substance; to get and secure Houses, Lands, and Reputation for your Children, and to lose your souls! As he that complained when he was to dye; *That he must burn in Hell for ever, for getting an estate for his Son, and neglecting his own soul. What will it profit a man to gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Matth.* 16. 24. To make all things else sure, and leave God, Grace and Glory to an uncertainty. As *Cæsar Borgia*

bewail'd when too late, saying when he was near death; *I have endeavoured to secure me against every danger but death; and having never thought of death, must now die.* Things eternal will then appear the greatest when men come to dye; then an interest in God, pardon and salvation will be valued beyond ten thousand worlds: And is it not worth the looking after now?

And what can compensate the loss of that soul, who miscarries in his All, and hath nothing left but the tormenting sense of what he hath lost, and the intolerable burden of what he hath found, as the fruit of his often cautioned folly? 'Tis a dreadful thing to be disappointed of salvation-hopes: What if thou should'st miss of glory at last, and thy end should be to be cut off, and to have thy portion with Hypocrites in that Lake which burns with fire and brimstone, where the worm never dieth, and the fire is never quenched? *Mark* 9. 44. How could'st thou bear, if when thou thinkest to enter into the joy of the Lord, then in a moment to be thrust into the place of torment? and when thou dreamest of carrying up into *Abraham*'s bosome, where is eternal pleasures: to fall into the hands of God, who is a consuming fire? this is fearful.

And yet this may be thy case. Think how possible, nay how easy 'tis for men to be deceiv'd in lesser matters, and that they who have had the highest confidences of a future blessedness, have been mistaken at last, and all their hopes have expir'd as a falling Meteor, and come

come to nothing, *Job.* 27. 8. *For what is the hope of the hypocrite though he hath gained much, when God taketh away his soul?* Men may think themselves to be something, and yet be nothing *Gal.* 6. 2. Come with confidence to the Bridegroom's doors, and demand an entrance as the foolish Virgins did, and yet be rejected. *Mat.* 25. 11, 12. *Afterward came also the other Virgins* (that is when the door was shut) *saying, Lord, Lord, open to us; but he answered and said: verily I say unto you, I know you not.* They may seem to have some reason for their claim, and produce evidences of their hope, and yet be turned away as workers of iniquity. *Mat.* 7. 22, 23. *Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? have cast out Devils? and in thy name have done many wonderful works? And then will I profess to them, I never knew you, depart from me ye workers of iniquity*: The heart is deep and deceitful, who can know it? none but he who searcheth the deep things of God can reach this bottom, and bring to light the hidden things thereof: The work of grace is a secret full of mysteries, that none can open and fully know, but the eternal Spirit that formed it in the womb of a Believer's heart: Seeming grace hath so near a resemblance to saving grace, that it puzzels the most curious and searching eye (if not enlightn'd with a beam from Heaven) to discern the difference besides, the slender measures of the Spirit that most have attained to in this life, with the subtill insinuations, the false representations, and treacherous prevarications of that bloody and

irreconcilable enemy of mankind, all which conspire to put a cheat upon the professing Christian, and render his Salvation exceeding doubtful. And suppose thy state should be safe, yet how perplexing and full of anxiety is it, to have the least suspition of thy unsoundness? To have the life of thy precious soul hang in suspence, and to be unresolv'd in that great case, whether thou must live or die to all eternity! O! how tormenting and heart-sinking is this! An awakened Soul that cannot rest in sin, nor yet hope in grace, or upon any Scripture-warrant come to a determination about his real interest in God, and things eternal, is like a troubled Sea that cannot rest; Instruments of Musick cannot allay its disquietude, no Creature-comforts can charm its heart to a peaceful composure: who does in reallity but suspect his eternal welfare, and but think he reads this hand-writing on the wall: *Mene, mene, tekel upharsin: Thou art weighed in the balance, and art found wanting*, Dan. 5. 25. 27. Nothing in all the World can be a Plaister broad enough for such a wound, no Cordial can cheer that heart, till Grace decides the controversy, and assures the Soul of an unquestionable title to the Heir of all things, and to the inheritance with the Saints in light: And have you not reason then to be restless till your propriety in these glorious treasures be attested; which, though difficult, yet is possible and feasible to all that follow Wisdom's counsel in order to it? The eternal truth hath opened a way to the decision of this question, whether I have eternal life or no, and laid

laid down certain marks of a Soul intitled to things above. 1 *Joh.* 5. 13. *These things have I written to you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life*; *Vers.* 12. 19 *Chap.* 3. 14. The Lord hath charged this to be the duty of all that profess their hopes of glory, to make their Calling and Election sure, 2 *Pet.* 1. 10. To examine themselves whether they be in the Faith, 2 *Cor* 13. 5. To prove their own work, that they may have rejoycing in themselves, *Gal.* 6. 4. which he would never have done where it impossible: He hath also promised the Spirit to help them in this work, and to lead them into all truth, bearing witness with their spirits that they are the Lords *Joh.* 16. 13. *Rom.* 8. 16. And upon this very account exhorts them to holiness, that they might not impede this sealing work of the Spirit *Eph.* 4. 30. And upon the arrival to this certainty, hath ensured great consolation and advantage, 2 *Pet.* 1. 8, 10, 11. All which words signifie nothing and reflect unrighteousness on the spirit of truth, were not an evidence of right to these heavenly things obtainable.

Quest. *But how may I come to the knowledge of this desirable truth; that Heavenly Treasures are surely mine, and that I may make a warrantable claim to God, to Christ, and these things of the other World?*

Sol. 1. First, By your conjugal union with the Heir of Heaven: All things in Heaven and

Earth are Christ's, he is the Heir of all things *Heb.* 1. 2. — *Hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed Heir of all things:* All things in Heaven and Earth are his by donation, purchase and inheritance juridically conferred over to him in the new covenant, and actually put into his hand, upon the finishing of his meritorious work and victory over death. *Matt.* 28. 18. *All power* πᾶσα ἐξουσία *is given to me in heaven and Earth:* Lawful power, right, privilege and authority, (as the word imports, and with this is the Lord Jesus invested, and hath all things put into his hands, and all creatures under his feet, *Heb.* 2. 7, 8. And all right to true riches is derived from him, through union with him. 1 *Cor.* 23. 23. *All things are yours, and you are Christ's and Christ is God's:* If you are Christ's then all things are yours, not else; your title is founded on your marriage-relation to him. *Gal.* 3. 29. *And if you are Christ's, then are you* Abraham's *seed, and Heirs according to the promise:* A title to these glorious treasures is made over in the new covenant, which covenant is confirm'd in Christ, and made in him and through him to all that are his: He is the way, there's no coming to these treasures but by him; he is the door, no entring into them but through him: He is the treasury it self, in whom all the riches of grace, all the fulness of pleasures and satisfaction lies; you must have the treasury before you can have the treasures; the well it self before the waters are yours; *He that hath the Son hath life;* hath him by

way

way of poſſeſſion, as an owner and proprietor: If you have Chriſt, you have all that is his, his perſon and purchaſe go together; *Rebekah* muſt conſent to go and marry *Iſaac* before ſhe could be inveſted with that ſubſtance and wealth which was his. This new covenant which intereſts a ſoul in the Lord Jeſus, and his unſearchable riches, is a marriage-covenant. *Hoſ.* 2. 19, 20. *And I will betroth thee unto me for ever, yea I will betroth thee unto me in righteouſneſs, and in judgment, and in loving-kindneſs, and in mercies; I will even betroth thee to me in faithfulneſs, and thou ſhalt know the Lord.* Ezek. 16.8. *I entred into covenant with thee, ſaith the Lord, and thou becameſt mine*; this was a marriage-covenant. *Jer.* 3. 14. *Turn O back-ſliding children, ſaith the Lord, for I am married to you.* If you would ſee your title to heavenly treaſures, try your conjugal union to the Lord Jeſus the Heir of Heaven. Every relation to Chriſt is not a conjugal relation. There is a general relation, as dead branches to the tree: *Joh.* 15. 2. *Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away.* A perſon may be in Chriſt as the luxuriant branch or ſucker is in the tree, that ſucks the ſap of priviledges, and gets ſome nouriſhment of frames, and comforts, but brings not forth fruit, it ſprouts out of the ſtock, as proud-fleſh grows on the wound, but hath no right union with the root, or nouriſhment from the head: Such are obtruders and hang bies, which take the place of children, but are ſtrangers, who climb up as the theif to ſteal, but comes not in by the door to dwell with God: they

are

are retainers to Christ's House, that now and then do some service for him, and have some scraps and favours, but are no abiding members of his house; like the Apricot, that leans on the wall, but is rooted in the earth.

There is a temporary Relation also; as of a Servant to a Master, where there is a propriety for a time: The servant comes into the house, enjoys priviledges and protection, and doth some service, is very useful for the family, and it may be beloved too: (as a servant.) And such is the relation of some to Christ; but this differs vastly from that union which entitles to the person and purchase of the Lord Jesus; he is mercenary in all he doth, and hath by-ends in his entrance and continuance; he does not any thing from pure love to Christ, but for self respects and advantage: his welfare is not rapt up in the welfare of the family, to stand or fall with it; to embark his All in the prosperity of that house: he lives in the family, and upon his Lord, but to himself, and is as the Planets which are carried about with the *Primum mobile*; but yet have a distinct motion and course of their own: he is in the family, but not of the family; and as his relation is but titular, so his station is but temporary; he abides not in the house for ever, *Joh.* 8. 35. And when he goes away he carries off nothing but his own; not jot of the inheritance is his: he hath fared well, and had a great deal of credit and comfort for a time: but goes as he came, and is the same person as he was.

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There is also a Concubine-Relation to Christ, which gives the soul some use of his kindness, but no right to his person. (b) *A Concubine is one that is contented with ones bed, but hath no conjugal love to his person; neither doth she pass into the husband's family, or are her children counted legitimate:* She is one that either by constraint or consent, comes over into an external communion with another for his use and bed; but is never married to his person, or hath chosen him for her husband, to become one flesh with him, to take up her delight in him, and to do all from a principle of love to him: And as she hath not the properties; so she hath not the priviledges of a Wife, for intimacy and entertainment, in respect of power and maintenance. Such is the relation that many have to Christ; they consent to have some enjoyment of Christ, but have no marriage-union with him; he is not theirs by choice, but eithe for necessity or advantage to enjoy their own pleasures by him, and receive some profit from him: the never saw an excellency in him, or were ever unhearted by him, as he is by his Spouse. *Cant.* 4. 9. *Thou hast ravished my heart, my Sister, my Spouse: thou hast ravished* (c) *my heart with one of thine eyes; with one chain of thy neck:* Thou hast unhearted me, or snacht away my heart: These never consented to all his proposals in order to union with him: they never heartily gave up themselves to him, nor entred into covenant with him, and became his. And as they are

(b) *Concubina a concubo.* Beza de repud. & divort p. 249. (c) לבבתני *Incordasti me.*

stran-

ſtrangers to an eſpouſal-ſtate; ſo are they to a Spouſe like diſpoſition; they have not the temper and carriage of a wife, not the priviledges that ſuch uſe to have; they are not acquainted with his ſecrets, nor the openings of his heart, and thoſe amorous embracements peculiar to ſuch a relation; they are not inveſted with any Authority or Rule; they have no power over their corruptions, nor command of their ſpirits and affections, that ſhould be in ſubjection to them: Grace bears no ſway in them; ſin and ſelf does all in their ſouls; neither were they ever enrolled in his family, or owned by the Lord Jeſus as his *Hephzibah*'s, nor have the allowance and ſpecial proviſions of the King's Bride, and Lamb's Wife; and as to their conceptions, and thoſe births they ſeem to have by Jeſus Chriſt, they are ſpurious and illegitimate, and never owned by the Lord Jeſus as the genuine products of his own Spirit. This is the caſe of thoſe that have not marriage-union with Chriſt; they have no right to him or his Treaſures. Try then your Eſpouſal relation to Chriſt.

Queſt. *How may I know whether I am married to Chriſt or no?*

Anſw. 1. Firſt, If you are married to Chriſt, you are ſuch as have ſpecial acquaintance with Chriſt; you know him as none elſe do. The wife hath the moſt peculiar and diſtinct knowledge of her husband of any: Others may know ſomething, yea much of him; but none knows

knows him so much as the wife; she hath acquaintance with all his excellencies, and all his infirmities; she has the largest tasts of his love and experience of his sweetness, and intimate converses with him of any in the world. So 'tis with the Spouse of Christ; she dwells in his presence, and lodges in his arms; she sees him within the veil uncloath'd of those coverings that stand between him and the eyes of strangers, and conceals his amiableness from common beholders: He puts aside his glorious Robe, and shews her his naked breast, and layes her hand upon his tender heart: she is much alone with him in his chambers, where he expresses intimacy with her, as *Isaac* did with *Rebekah*, and discloses the secrets of his heart, and the greatest unveilings of his love: He tells her what thoughts he had upon her from all eternity; when he was in his Father's Kingdom, his heart was working after her, and he thought the time long till he came down to see her; and no sooner did he cast his eye upon her (though then she lay polluted in her blood, and cast out into the field, to the loathing of her person) but his heart did burn within him towards her; and it was the time of love: He tells her all the time of his hard labour in the world for her, seem'd but a few daies; and the unsupportable burden of her sins, and the Father's wrath upon him for her sake, seem'd but as nothing for the love he bore unto her. In these converses he assures her of his Love, Person and Kingdom; and however he may seem in his carriages, yet his heart is fixt upon, and faithful to her, and swears he will

will never, never leave her, but after a little absence come and receive her to himself, and she shall be for ever with him. Thus he manifests himself to her, as he doth not to the world; by reason of which she becomes so well acquainted with him, and knows his voice, and by faith sees his sheep; she can tell by experience who, and what her Beloved is, and how far better than other Beloveds. There's never soul that's married to Christ, but hath his time, when he makes out some special discoveries of his love and self to it: and it can tell some stories of what Christ did once say and do unto her: what slights she hath had of him, and gifts from him: such a soul can tell, how when he was dead, Christ quickened him: when he was lost, Christ found him: when he was in prison, Christ set him free: he washed him when in his blood, and poured in Oyl into his wounds: healed his backslidings, and loved him freely: He can say with *Rebekah* to her brother *Laban: Thus the man spake to me, and shewed the ear-rings and the bracelets, Gen.* 24. 30. And with *Judah* brings forth the signet, bracelets and staff, *Gen.* 38 25. and tells with the blind man how Christ opened his eyes, and what he said to him, *Joh. cap.* 9. *ver.* 15, 35, 37. And though by his sin and unbelief he may lose the sight of him for a time, and be under a suspense of his discover'd kindness: yet if the Believer would be true to his experience, he can discover such an acquaintance with Christ as no Hypocrite ever had.

Answ. 2. Secondly, Another thing that will prove your marriage to Christ, is your conjugal-

love

love to him. *Jer.* 2. 2, *I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thy espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness in a Land not sown.* The Lord convinceth *Israel* of the great decay and change of their Love to what it once was; there was a time when their affections were high towards God, when he call'd them out of *Egypt*, took them from the Iron-furnace, and married them to himself; then nothing was too hard for them; they could follow God in a wilderness, where there was nothing but God alone to satisfie them; creatures were wanting to allure them, and yet they could stick at nothing; no difficulties should part God and them: Whence came this warmth of their affection? why it was there neerness to God that created them: The Lord hath taken them into a marriage covenant, and carried them in his bosome; and this inflamed their hearts after him. When the Lord brings a soul into a espousal-state, he gives them espousal-love; and that is the greatest love: O sweet! saith *Rutharford*, were that sickness to be soul-sick for him; and a living death it were to die in the fire of the love of that Soul-lover Jesus. The Apostle makes this an essential duty of a married state, to have conjugal affections: The Husband to love his Wife as his own flesh, and the Wife to love her own Husband as her self, *Eph.* 5. 28, *Tit.* 2. 4. And the prophet reckons this love to God as the certain fruit of their Covenant-relation to him. *Isa.* 56. 6. *That joyn themselves to the Lord, to serve him, and to love the Name of the Lord.* As soon as *Paul* had espoused the

the Lord Jesus, it appeared in his supreme love to him; he valued none like Christ: *He counted all things dross and dung for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ his Lord*, Phil. 3. 8. *To be found in him, not having his own righteousness*, v. 9. *To know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death*, v. 10. Conjugal love is a personal love; pure love to Christ is set on Christ himself for himself, not for his gifts that come from him; but for those excellencies that reside in him; 'tis love to his person, not to his patrimony onely; 'tis love springs from his love. 1 *Joh.* 4. 19. *We love him because he first loved us.* True affections to the Lord Jesus are the births of his own love to us, a coal kindled from his fire.

Conjugal love is also peculiar as well as personal love; so far as 'tis conjugal, 'tis him, and none but him; or if to others, 'tis for his sake: Espousal love to Christ affects none like him: If there be any person or thing thou lovest more than Christ, or equal with him, thy affections to him are whorish, not conjugal: *He that loveth Father or Mother more than me, is not worthy of me: He that loveth Son or Daughter more than me, is not worthy of me*, Mat. 10. 37. Yea, he that doth not hate Father or Mother, or any thing, so far as it is inconsistent with love to Christ, cannot be his Disciple, *Luke* 14. 26. True love to Christ will let none in all the world share in that love which Christ hath; 'twill take none into his bed but himself; 'tis chaste love.

Again,

Again, Conjugal love is not onely to Christ, but 'tis such a love as longs to be *found in Christ, not in himself*: it would have all his glory and excellency in Christ; it reckons Christ for all that's truly honourable as to him: it would get as near to Christ as possible: yea it never rests till in him: *To be found in him.* 'Tis also such a love as conforms to Christ: love is of an assimulating spirit; it would be like to its peculiar object. The affectionate wife conforms as much as may be to her Husband: so 'tis with the Spouse of Christ, she would in every thing that is imitable resemble him, and 'tis her great trouble she is not more like him: what would such a soul give if his heart was like Christ's heart: if he had such a spirit and life as the Lord Jesus had on Earth? it would be holy as Christ is holy, and cannot set up a stand short of that: 'Tis true, the soul hath not such a spirit as Christ had: 'tis too proud, vain, carnal, passionate, earthly, selfish, and that troubles him: but it can never be quiet, till he comes nearer to the pattern in Heaven, and to a full resemblance of his well beloved Jesus.

Answ. 3. Thirdly, A soul espoused to Christ will leave all for Christ: that's the condition of marriage between Christ and his Bride, *Psal.* 45. v. 10. 11. *Hearken O Daughter and consider, and incline thine ear: forget also thine own people, and thy Father's house, so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord, and worship thou him:* As if he should say, weigh and consider the terms on which this match is to be concluded between Christ and you. If you will

be his, you must leave all for him; you must forsake all your other lovers, friends, interests, comforts for Christ, so far as these hinder your love to Christ, your communion with, and serviceableness unto him. When the Woman comes to be married, she leaves her friends, Fathers house, Country, and all to come and live with him that shall be her Husband. *Rebekah* left her Father, Brother, Friends and Country to go to *Isaac*, *Gen.* 24. 58. *And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, wilt thou go with this man? And she said I will go.* That soul that cannot consent really and considerately to part with all for Christ, never yet came up to marriage-terms. The treaty between Christ and that soul never went far enough for a conclusion; and if it go no farther, if thy soul cannot deal to this, to part with all thy interests, thy dearest comforts, yea thy self for Christ, the match must after all be broken, and Christ and thee part at last, yea part for ever. O soul! try thy heart in this; here lies the knot, the vertical point; this is the most difficult of all Christ's proposals, and that the soul is longest consenting to, even the letting go all for Christ: His person may please well enough; his estate is desirable for a reversion; but now to take leave of, and to go with Christ, this is the *hard saying*: Persons would have Christ and the world too, Christ and friends too, Christ and reputation, peace, liberty, pleasure, and self too; and if this will not be granted, break the bargain: but if ever Christ and you have closed, and you are his, and he yours, you cannot count any thing

too

too dear to part with for him, or to let go at his bidding: If Christ calls for Estate, Husband, Wife, Children, an *Isaac*, a *Benjamin*, a right Eye, a right Hand, all must go; and you must part with them freely and chearfully, as *Abraham* did with *Isaac*, *Gen.* 22. 3. *Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his Asses, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his Son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and went unto the place of which God had told him.* Not as *Jacob* did part with *Benjamin*, by constraint, and grudgingly, *Gen.* 43. 11. *If it must be so now, do this, &c.* He was almost starv'd before he would consent to part with *Benjamin*; and when he did, he lets him go last of all: he parts with *the best fruits of the Land, Balm, Honey, Spice, Myrrh, Nuts, Almonds, double money*, any thing first; at last Benjamin was forced out too. Many must have their comforts wrench'd out of their hands before they will let them go, but this is not love to Christ. A soul married to Christ will say with *Mephibosheth* concerning his Land, *Let Ziba take all, for as much as my Lord the King is come again in peace to his own house*, 2 *Sam.* 19. 30. So let God take all my estate, strength, liberty, comforts, seeing the Lord Jesus is come home to my soul in peace: Houses, Lands, Friends, Credit, Peace, Life, may be dear, but Christ will be dearer if he and you are one flesh. *All Bavaria* (said *George Carpenter*) *is not so dear to me as my Wife and Children; yet for Christ's sake I will forsake them chearfully. Do you think me such a fool* (said *Ogier* to one that tempted him with

life and preferment) *that I should change eternal things for temporal. Loss of goods is great,* (saith *Hooper*) *but loss of God's grace and favour is greater.* Love is never throughly seen till it comes to parting: O the tuggings, holdings, shifts and reasonings that men will have before they will part with that they dearly love: *Now it will appear* (saith *Philpot*) *what we love best, for to that we love we will stick.* If Christ have most of your hearts, you will let fall every thing out of your hands to hold fast Christ: *I have* (said M. *Bale*) *exil'd my self for ever from mine own native Countrey, Kindred, Friends, Acquaintance, which are the great delights of this life, and am well contented for the sake of Christ.*

Answ. 4. Fourthly, A Soul married to Christ, stays, and lives on Christ. The Wife casts her self upon her Husband's love and care for her supplies, and lives on his allowance for all her provisions: 'tis suspitious for a married Woman to be maintained by strangers, and to live on other men for what she needs: 'tis the Husbands duty to to provide for his own, and to nourish and cherish his Wife as the Lord the Church, *Eph.* 9. 25. and 'tis the Wives duty to go to and rely on his faithfulness for it: So 'tis with the Soul that hath espoused Christ, it is to live on Christ for all it needs: they that take Christ aright, take him for their All, not for better or worse, for richer or poorer, as Women take their earthly Husbands, (for Christ is always best of all, always exceeding rich, and full of unsearchable treasures,) but to take him for

their

their only and sufficient portion at all times, and in all estates. *Lam.* 3. 24. *The Lord is my portion, saith my Soul, therefore will I trust in him. Lord,* (said *Paulinus*, when his City, Gold and Silver was taken away) *let not the loss of these things trouble me; for thou art all, and more than all these to me:* (*Shaw's* Tombstone, p. 33.) Christ is the Believers All in the way, and God his All in All at the end. *It hath pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell, and under him all things should be put,* 2 *Col.* 1. 19. *Heb.* 2. 8. And this is for the supply, comfort and blessedness of those that are his. *Eph.* 1. 23. *Which is the body, the fulness of him who filleth all in all.* Whatever Christ hath (as Mediator) is the Churches for her use and profit: If men have plenty of liquors, they fil their vessels with them; if they have much riches, they place them in their treasury, so doth Christ dispose of his fulness for his Churches good: hence 'tis the Spouse of Christ comes leaning on her Beloved from the Wilderness, *Cant.* 8. 5. and dares adventure her All on the love and sufficiency of her loving and lovely Lord; she is full of failings, but she lives on him for righteousness; many are her weaknesses, but she goes to Christ for strength. *Isa.* 45. 24. *Surely shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength:* She is sensible of many wants, but casts her self on the promise; *My God shall supply all your wants, Phil.* 4. 19. Her backslidings, temptations, dangers, troubles and fears are many, but she stays on the Lord Jesus, whom she hath chosen for her only friend in

Heaven and Earth, and there she lays her self down in his bosome, when wearied with difficulties and doubts, and embarques her self in his faithfulnes for all she stand in need of, for life and godlines, for grace and glory.

Answ. 5. Fifthly, Fruitfulnes to Christ proves Marriage to Christ: Hence the Spouse is set forth by Metaphors that expres's fruitfulnes; a *Garden*, not a wilderness; *a well watered Garden*, which is usually most fruitful, where the Spices flow out, where the Graces of the Spirit are more operative and abundant, and Souls become more fruitful in manifested holines: *An Orchad planted with choice and pleasant fruits, Camphire, Spikenard, Saffron, Calamus, Cinamon, with all trees of Frankincense, Myrrh and Aloes*, with all the chiefest Spices, which signifie the preciousnes, variety and abundance of grace and holines in those who are savingly united to the Lord Jesus: *A flock of Sheep, whereof every one beareth twins, and not one is barren*, *Cant.* 4. 12, 13, 14, 16. *cb.* 4. 2. 'Tis compared to the *Palm-tree*, the *Cedar*, the *Vine*, the *Fig-tree*, a green *Olive*, plants famous for flourishing, growth, clusters of fruit, constant fruitfulnes; 'tis said of the Fig-tree, it bears fruit all the year long, and in many places they shall always find green figs on it: Such is the Spouse of Christ, compared with the world and hypocrites fruitful and flourishing: *A good tree bringeth forth good fruit*, Mat. 7. 17. *The root of the righteous yieldeth fruit*, *Prov.* 12. 12. Wherever the grace of God is received in truth, there it brings forth fruit, *Col.* 1. 6. As sin brings

forth

forth fruit unto death, so doth grace unto life, *Rom.* 6. 22. No sooner doth the Lord Jesus espouse a Soul, but he heals it of its barrenness: *He maketh the barren Woman to keep house*, Psal. 113. 9. *Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away*, *Joh.* 15. 2. A barren Christian is a monster in Religion, no living member of Christ's body; indeed there are Winter-seasons when fruit may not appear, but even then 'tis in the seed and sap; and there is a preparative for fruit, which appears in the season, but to be always without the fruits of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, *Gal.* 5. 22, 23. is a sign of one that never had marriage-union, and intimate communion with Jesus Christ, but is the certain mark of a fruitless Fig-tree, in danger of cutting down, and the character of that ground which is cursed, and nigh to burning, *Luke* 13. 7, 9. *Heb.* 6. 8. Souls, try your state, 'tis for your lives, your All depends upon your marriage-union with Christ: Had you never any special acquaintance with Christ? Have you no conjugal love to Christ? Cannot you consent to leave all for Christ? Do you usually live and stay on other things for life and salvation, and not on Christ: Have you been ever barren souls, that never brought forth the fruits of the Spirit unto God? then were you never married to Christ, nor have any true title to heavenly treasures.

Mark 2. Secondly, Your interest in heavenly things is known by the naturalness and supremacy of your love to them; *Where the treasure*

is, there will the heart be, Mat. 6. 21. If heavenly things be yours, your heart is there; worldly men have the *World set in their hearts, Eccl.* 3. 11. Their heart is but the *World copied out*: So heavenly souls have Heaven set in their hearts, which are but the counterpane of Heaven; every thing hath a natural love to his own, the World will love his own. *Job.* 15. 19. *No man ever hated his own flesh, Eph.* 5. 29. What affections have brute beasts for their young, and will venture their lives to defend and maintain them. 'Tis storied of the Storks, when the Town of *Delph* in the low Countreys was on fire, and the Storks perceived the fire to come near their nests, they endeavoured to carry away their young, but when they could not remove them, they flutter'd over them with their wings, covering them from the flames till they all perished together, (*Belg. Com. wealth.*) So strong is natural affection to its interest, and the natural issues of it self; much stronger should gracious affections be to their interests: *O how I love thy Law!* (saith *David*) *'tis my meditation all the day long, Psal.* 119. 97. Whence came this affection? it was from his interest in those great and lovely truths. *Psal.* 119. 111. *Thy testimonies have I chosen as an heritage for ever, for they are the rejoycing of my heart.* Souls risen with Christ, and born to the inheritance above, will set their affections on things above, *Col.* 3. 1, 2. Where is thy heart, Christian, in Heaven or Earth? What things are dearest to thee, and sweetest to thy taste? canst thou prize the light of God's countenance better

than life? had'st thou rather be a door-keeper in God's House than dwell in the Pavilions of this World? Is a little of Heaven better than a great deal of Earth? and can thy heart consent to be at any loss in the World to enjoy God in his Ordinances, and to be enriched with spiritual blessings in heavenly places? Then heavenly things are thine.

Mark 3. Thirdly, if heavenly things be yours, it will appear by your heart-cares for them, and vigorous pursuits of them; how careful are men of their interests, to secure and enlarge them? *Phil.* 2. 21. *All men seek their own*: If the things of Heaven be yours, your greatest care will be to get and keep them; when *Kish* thought his Son *Saul* was lost, he left caring for the *Asses*, sorrowing for him, saying, *What shall I do for my Son?* 1 *Sam.* 10. 2. Christians, if heavenly things be yours, they will lie nearer your hearts than all the World besides; the sense or fear of losing them will more trouble you than all losses besides: the world, relations, creature-comforts will be forgotten: when you apprehend a death on your heavenly interests, you will do more, and part with more to get Heaven, than the World and dearest comforts of it. Many will pretend desires for Heaven, as the young man in the Gospel: but Christ will say to them as to his Hearers, *Mat.* 5. 47. *What do you more than others?* Souls, you would have Christ here, and Heaven hereafter, but what do you for it? what do you more than hypocrites and common professors, whose portion is in this life? can you leave

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the world for God? Can you deny your self for the pleasing of Christ? and part with your right eye, and right hand; throw away your Idols of gold and silver, the world, and fleshly lusts, and honour God with your time, strength and substance? Can you let your Plough stand still to follow God's; and stick at no pains and hardships to enjoy the least spiritual good? Then are heavenly things yours.

Mark 4. Fourthly, Then are you interested in Heavenly Treasures, when your hearts and spirits are suited to them; when the Lord hath let in a heavenly tincture on your hearts; and inlaid your spirits with heavenliness, and a mind that answers to heavenly things, as face answers face in the water: When God intends men for Heaven, he doth in time fit them for it; and where he gives a title to mercy, he gives a capacity also; where he makes over the riches of glory; he makes that soul a vessel fit for glory. Men do not purchase Pearls for Swine, and build Schools for brute beasts. God did not make the Heavens for fishes, and the Sea for beasts, but suited every creature to its element: They that are his adoption, are his new Creation also, *Ephes.* 2. 10. and when they are designed to a blessed end, they are principled for it, and have a disposition put into them to move towards it. They that are set apart for Heaven hereafter, do bear the image of their heavenly Father here, 1 *Cor.* 15. 49. There is a stamp of glory upon the Heirs of glory, though it may be so covered with dirt, and worn out with the rust of corruption, as not to be easily

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seen at all times. *Whose is this image and superscription? Mat.* 22. 20. *Cæsar's* coin hath *Cæsar's* stamp; and the Children of Heaven have their Fathers mark upon their foreheads, *Rev.* 14. 1. If Christs Treasures be yours, you are his Treasury; though earthen vessels, yet treasures, vessels and bags that wax not old. Do you hope for spiritual blessings? What manner of spirits are you of? Do you savour heavenly things? What things do best suit and please your spirits, the things of Heaven, or the things of the World; grace, or goods: righteousness, or riches; spiritual things, or carnal? What goes down easiest, or when down, sits easiest on your stomacks? The Heirs of Heaven are Non-conformists to this world, but transformed into the Spirit of Heaven, and the renewing of their minds to their new estate, blessedness and glory, *Rom.* 12. 1. That's a second thing wherein this Heavenly Trade lies, in securing and clearing up your intrest in heavenly things.

Thirdly, Another thing wherein this Heavenly Trade lies is this; in getting in of heavenly goods: This is a great part of Traders business, to be furnishing themselves with wares fit for their employment and advantage; the Artificer in making: the Merchant in buying in goods that are vendible, and will turn to profit. So must Wisdom's Merchants get themselves stor'd with Wisdom's wares, that they may be able to drive on her Trade. Onely in this lies the difference: earthly goods are either the products of mens labours, and effects of their industry: or else the purchase of their money

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and treasures: But heavenly goods come not in this way, as the proportionable reward of their labours, or return of their money: Indeed heavenly bread must be laboured for: but when all is done, the Son of man gives it to them, *John* 6. 27. Salvation must be wrought out, as if it lay at their fingers end: and yet this very will and power to work wrought in them, *Phil.* 2. 12, 13. *Work out your salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.* No sufficiency is found in the creature, before saving grace helps, to embrace its overtures, no more than a dead body to receive life. *Ephes.* 2. 1. *You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, Joh.* 15. 16. The soul's choice of Christ is the effect of Christs first chusing him; and its love to God the product of Gods first loving him, 1 *Jo.* 4. 19. and the souls fruitfulness is the effect of Christs purposing and appointing it thereunto. *No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him, Joh.* 6. 44. Not onely morally by perswading the will with potent arguments: but physically, by working the will, by a powerful inclining and disposing the will to come to, and chuse Christ, through the irresistible operation of the Spirit; *So then, 'tis not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy, Rom.* 9. 16. Salvation-grace both of righteousness and holiness, is freely given to the thirsty soul through and with Christ, *Rev.* 20. 6. and the inclination and power to receive as freely bestowed also, *Phil.* 1. 29. *To you it is*

given in the behalf of Christ, not onely to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake. Faith it self is the gift of God, both the power and will to believe, not given to every man alike: *For all men have not Faith, 2 Thes.* 3. 2. because the Father was not pleased effectually to bestow it. *Deut.* 29. 4. *The Lord hath not given you a heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear to this day: Who hath made thee to differ? or what hast thou which thou didst not receive? 1 Cor.* 3. 7. If the differencing of one man from another, as to his improvement of grace, lay in his own inclinations and natural freedom of his own will, then there was something in the creature that made this difference, contrary to this Scripture; and a foundation laid in a man to glory, which wholly overthrows the design of Redemption-grace, which is to take off all boasting, 1 *Cor.* 1. 29. *Rom.* 3. 27. and to lay all the praise and glory of man's salvation on special grace, *Eph.* 1. 5, 6. neither is the first grace onely freely given; but more grace also, all sufficiency after (conferred for every good word and work; yea, for every thought that is good) comes from the same grace that first called you, which must also perfect every good work to the day of Salvation, 2 *Cor.* 3. 5. our sufficiency (who have grace) to think or do the least spiritual good, is deriv'd from the same fountain-fulness that is in Christ, *Joh.* 1. 16. Eternal life, with whatever leads thereto, is the gift of God, *Rom.* 6. v. 23. As Christ, so all things with him are freely given, *Rom.* 8. 32. not onely the seed of grace, but the growth of grace; not onely the

habit,

habit, but the act of grace; all comes from Christ in the way of Redemption-grace. Get your hearts well established with this grace, that nothing in you, or done by you, can merit or procure any thing of the Father, but upon the account of Christ, and his grace, and promise in him to all that by the Son do come unto him. Goods you need for a daily Trade, but no money and price will pass for them, *Isa.* 55. 1. they are freely given, and yet you may boldly come for them: So you must with empty sacks, your friend in Heaven will fill them, and return your money in your sacks mouth. Christians, a considerable part of your work (and that which laies the foundation to all your Trade) lies in getting your souls furnish'd with heavenly wares: You will drive but a poor Trade for Heaven, if you do not often receive goods from Heaven. Alas!! what can you do in Christianity without continual supplies from Christ? *Laodicea* could not do any good in Religion, for want of goods from Christ: She had none of his tryed gold, and therefore grew soon poor and miserable: If goods fail, trade falls, and livelihood with it: What advantage doth the Tradesman miss, and what losses doth he sustain, by wanting goods to furnish his Customers? So do Christians when they want grace to serve their occasions, necessities, temptations and duties; what advantage might souls get, had they but grace, when they come under Ordinances and Duties? and what losses do they meet with for want of grace, under afflictions, trials and employments? how pitifully do they carry it under

der troubles, and providential exercises, and are oft-times sadly foil'd for want of grace and wisdom to manage such trials? You have daily need of more grace, as you have of bread for your bodies: Your occasions, temptations and work are spending, and without fresh supplies from the Treasury, you will soon be empty and impoverished: Neglect but your spiritual recruits one day, and you will feel it: 'Tis your interest, if you are Traders, to keep your shops full, and to be often sending for more goods: Grace will never lye long on your hands; other goods may: You will have still occasions to exercise grace in your dealings with God and men: you can never be over-stor'd with Wisdom's wares.

'Tis your duty also to make use of Christ continually: In every thing to make known your requests to him: to draw waters out of this Well of Salvation every day: He is a Fountain sealed for your use: he is made of God to be wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption too: for this end, that they might live upon him to these ends: This is to live by the Faith of the Son of God, which is the Christians daily duty: He complains as being injur'd when his people will not come unto him that they might have life, *John* 5. 40. He is troubled when his Children will not make use of him: *Hitherto you have asked nothing: Ask and you shall receive that your joy may be full, Joh.* 16. 24. Never was full breast more pain'd for want of drawing, than the Lord Jesus is, when his people receive not from him that fulness

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that is laid up in him for their use.

'Tis your advantage also to be often at Christ's door, and to be continually fetching in supplies for your Souls: This is the way to grow rich apace; to get in more and more of the unsearchable riches of Christ; *Rev.* 3. 18. This is the way to be filled with the fruits of righteousness, to be more throughly furnished unto all good works, to the glory and praise of God, 2 *Tim.* 3. 17. *Phil.* 1. 12 This is the way to do every thing better, and to abound in the work of the Lord, and to be more compleat in all the will of God, 1 *Cor.* 15. 58. *Col.* 4. 12. By this means you will become more serviceable unto others, and useful in the place where you live, and in the Societies where God hath placed you: the more full of grace, the more able to profit others. Rom. 15. 14. *That ye always are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.* 2 Cor. 1. 4. *That we may be able to comfort them with the same comfort wherewith we are comforted of God.* They that freely receive, will be able freely to give; and that's a blessed thing, *Acts* 20. 35. And till you receive, you cannot give. Christians, get in more grace every day for your own use, for the glory of God, and the good of others: Labour to be furnished with every grace, especially those graces which the Lord hath more use of, and the time, condition and place you are in, do more especially call for, *Heb.* 12. 28. 2 *Pet.* 1. 5.

Be sure to be well furnished with Faith, that's an useful grace at all times (for we live by Faith, *Heb.* 10. 38.) but especially in evil times,

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in times of temptation and affliction. Faith is an eye, a hand, a foot at all times; 'tis a grace alwaies useful at every turn; you cannot be without it and be well; 'tis a working grace, and that's good for Traders; you cannot work without it, 2 *Thes.* 1. 4. A building grace, *Jude v.* 3. 20. A nourishing grace, 1 *Tim.* 4. 6. A soul-enriching grace, *Rom.* 4. 12. A soul-strengthening grace, *Ephes.* 3. 16, 17. But 'tis especially needful in evil times, it being a cheering grace, *Rom.* 15. 13. 'Tis a soul-keeping grace, and that's good in dangerous times, 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. 'Tis a soul-saving grace, that saves in troubles, and out of troubles, *Psal.* 27. 5. *Jam.* 5. 15. 'Tis a heart-establishing grace, 2 *Chr.* 20. 20. A world-contemning grace, *Heb.* 11. 26. A world-conquering grace, 1 *Joh.* 5. 4. A soul-securing grace, *Heb.* 11. 23. *By Faith Moses was hid three months.* It secures a person in troubles: 'tis a breast-plate to preserve the heart, 1 *Thes.* 5. 8. And a shield to cover the head, *Ephes.* 6. 16. It leads a person through trouble, *Heb.* 11. 29. *By Faith they passed through the Red Sea, as by dry Land, which the Egyptians assaying to do, were drowned.* O get in plenty of this precious unfeigned Faith, for that's the great trading-grace of a Christian; for it gets in, and laies out every grace. Faith is the receiving grace; it receives in Christ, *Eph.* 3. 17. and it receives from Christ, *John* 1. 16. Faith is the key that opens Christ's Treasures; the hand that takes out his tryed gold: Faith is the carrying, and recarrying grace: Faith comes up to the market-price, and never breaks with

God on terms, but ſubſcribes to all the demands of Chriſt, and ſo never returns empty. Chriſtians, you will never want goods for your Heavenly Trade, if you can but keep Faith in exerciſe; your ſhops will never be empty, as long as Faith can ſtir up and down, and keep up its Journeys to Heaven: If there be any goods in the promiſes, any wares in Heaven, Faith will have them down, as long as the ſoul needs them, and be it for God's intereſt to part with them: O then get faith! Alas, what pitiful Trade do ſome drive for want of Faith! Choice goods will not off; precious promiſes, pertinent inſtructions, perſwaſions and encouragements lye on Chriſt's hands for want of faith in them that hear.

Chriſtians, you will make nothing of Religion without Faith, in the daies we live in; you will ſoon ſhut up ſhop, decay and break when troubles come to purpoſe, without ſtore of Faith. Faith will fill your ſtore-houſes, do your work, put off your goods, get in your rights, pay your debts, and maintain you richly on the incomes of your Trade.

Patience is another grace that will much ſerve you in your Spiritual Trade; you have need of Patience to do the will of God; no working without Patience. 2 *Cor.* 12. 12. *Truly the ſigns of an Apoſtle were wrought among you in all Patience.* *Rom.* 5. 4. *Patience worketh experience.* Souls are apt to be weary of well doing without Patience, and to tyre in running, without this long-breath'd grace of Patience. *Heb.* 12. 1. *Let us run with Patience the race that is ſet before*

fore us. No receiving the fruit of Ordinances and Duties without Patience. *Luke* 8. 15. *They on the good ground are they which in an honest and good heart, having heard the Word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with Patience.* The Lord usually tries his peoples Patience before they come to the fruit of Promises, and bring forth the obedience of Precepts; there's a winter between seed-time and harvest; many wet, weeping dajes between sowing and reaping, *Ut enim segetem in agro pluvias, nives, glacies, pruinas, grandines, & tempestates ferre necessarium est antequam maturescat, & fructum ferat, ita hominem fidelem intus & extrinsecus multa pati mala oportet.* Stell. The seed must lye long, it may be, under ground, and when 'Tis come up, be nipt up with frosts, and covered with Snow, and Hail, and bear many a storm before it ripens, and brings forth fruit, and this calls for Patience; yea many times long-suffering. *The husbandman waiteth for the precious fruits of the earth, and hath long Patience for it, untill he receive the early and latter rain, Jam.* 5. 7. Patience is needful to suffer, as well as do the Will of God. *Rev.* 13. 10. *Here is the Patience and Faith of the Saints*: To endure captivity and cruel Death for the sake of Christ, Patience to wait for the Promise, *Rom.* 8. 25. and Patience to receive it. *Heb.* 10. 36. *Patience* (saith *Seneca*) *is a salve for every sore, that onely which alleviates our burdens: without it we cannot be men or Christians:* (saith another) *'tis the grace that makes a compleat and well accomplish'd Christian,* Manton. *James* 1. 4. When reason is at a

ſtand, and hope almoſt at an end, and all refuge fails; Patience ſteps in, bears the burden, and calms the ſoul.

Hope is a neceſſary grace to this great undertaking, reckoned among the three Cardinal virtues that wonderfully adorn a Chriſtian's ſpirit and converſation. 1 *Cor.* 13. 13. *Now abideth Faith, and Hope, and Charity*: Hope is the offſpring and refreſhment of Faith; 'tis begotten by Faith, and (ſaies ones) *As a good child relieves its father Faith in time of need.* Hope is an expectation, Faith a perſwaſion. Faith eyes the promiſe, hope the thing promiſed, as ſure though future, which comforts the ſoul under the preſent want of deſired mercy; and this is needful to cheer the ſoul under its exigencies and diſappointments in the way of its Chriſtian converſation. Hope keeps in the fire, and keeps up the houſe, *Heb.* 3. 6. *Whoſe houſe are we if we hold faſt the confidence and rejoycing of our hope firm to the end.* Were it not for Hope the houſe would fall aſunder; Hope keeps it together, till the Lord new build it in Heaven: Hope anchors the ſoul in a ſtorm, and makes it ſteady under ſhaking tempeſts, *Heb.* 6. 19. Hope maintains a Chriſtian in a hard winter, while the ſeed is under clods, and till the corn come to the barn. 1 *Cor.* 9. 10. *He that ploweth, ploweth in Hope* (that is of a good harveſt) that will compenſate all his labours. Hope ſecures the ſoul from ſhame and diſappointment under temporary forbearance, *Pſal.* 34. 22. It helps it to rejoyce in tribulation, *Rom.* 5. 2. and compaſſeth him about with mercy, *Pſal.* 32. 10.

Humi-

Humility, Self-denial, Goodneſs, Temperance, Gentleneſs, Love, Zeal, Holy Fear, are all good goods that will off well, and turn to the Trader's profit, if well improved: Get your ſoul's well ſtor'd with theſe graces of the Spirit, alſo if you ever think to drive a good Trade of godlineſs.

Get your minds filled with knowledge, as well as your hearts with grace; that's part of the Chriſtian's Treaſure. 2 *Cor.* 4. 6. *We have this Treaſure* (that is of the knowledge of God in the face of Chriſt) *in earthen veſſels: In whom are hid all the Treaſures of wiſdom*, *Col.* 2. 3. Saving knowledge is a Treaſure laid up in Chriſt for Believers, and to be fetched out for their uſe and comfort. *The riches of the full aſſurance of underſtanding, and acknowledgement of the myſtery of God, and of the Father, and of Chriſt*, *Col.* 2. 2. The Goſpel is a myſtery, a ſecret, hid from the natural eye, and cannot be known but by the revelation of the Spirit. To have an inward, clear, ſenſible, experimental and certain apprehenſion of the glorious truths of the Goſpel, opened and confirmed to the eye of Faith, is a high attainment beyond what any reach to, but thoſe that have the anointings of the Spirit, and to whom 'tis given by the Spirit as the fruit of prayer, and faithful attendance on his teachings in the Goſpel and Ordinances of Chriſt: This is called a rooting and eſtabliſhment in the Faith, *Col.* 2. 7. and growing in knowledge, 2 *Pet.* 3. 18. alluding to trees that being well planted do take deeper root in the earth, and in time come to greater ſettlement and ſtrength

againſt ſhakings: And as children that gradually grow and encreaſe to higher ſtatures; ſo this ſpiritual knowledge is gradually encreaſed; 'tis not the priviledge of new-born babes, of perſons at their firſt converſion, to have this deep fathoming of Goſpel myſteries: But of ſtronger Chriſtians, who by conſtant attendances on the Means of Grace, and in progreſs of time, by Faith, Humility, Prayer and Attention to the Spirit, do at length come to higher meaſures of this illumination, and full aſſurance of truth. As *Gerſon* reports of a godly man he knew, who at firſt was exerciſed with many doubts and fears, and ſhaking of Faith; but at laſt through humiliation of ſoul, and a captivating of his underſtanding to Divine Truth, together with the illumination of the Spirit, came to a wonderful clearneſs in the matters of Faith, and of his ſoul-eſtate, with ſuch a ſettlement of ſpirit, and certainty about his ſalvation, as to have no more doubts remaining in him. Chriſtians, content not your ſelves with ſome notions of truth, and ſhallow cold apprehenſions of the great myſteries of ſalvation; but labour to get in greater meaſures of ſpiritual underſtanding, both objective, as to the Truths to be known; and ſubjective, as to the diſcerning of them: Alas, we know as yet nothing as we ought; there are deeps in the knowledge of Chriſt for Elephants, as well as ſhallows for Lambs; and there are greater beamings on the ſouls eye to be obtained, and more certain underſtanding, and familiar acquaintance to be had with the ſame Truths we know. Your buſineſs

Chri-

Christians, in the Heavenly Trade is to get more Divine Wisdom, to be led farther into all Truth, and to enter into the Mysteries of the Gospel; wading farther and farther into Sanctuary deeps; to know more of God, of the way to him, and the things freely given of him, and to know better what you know: *Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them to babes.* There's a secret in Gospel truths which the wisest men in the world can never by their greatest Wisdom come to see, without the special revelation of the Spirit: As none can come to see the spirits, salts, and occult virtues, in herbs and minerals, till by Chymistry they are extracted: Others may discern and receive the things themselves in the gross and bulk of them, and yet never see or taste those choice spirits hid in them: So 'tis with such as are strangers to a spiritual knowledge, they apprehend Truths in the bulk and letter of them. *A carnal man* (saith *Hooker*) *may hear the sound of the Word, understand the signification; his judgment may see the evidence of the argument, and force of reason in them; and yet the reality and spiritualness of that Divine good never apprehended. The world by wisdom knew not God,* 1 *Cor.* 1. 21. There's no proportion between a spiritual object and a carnal eye: *The carnal mind cannot discern the things of the Spirit of God, neither can they know them, for they are spiritually discerned,* 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. Labour to see the beauty and amiableness of Truth; to see your propriety in Truth, to taste an inward sweetness,

Commentary on Christ's last Prayer.

and raviſhing pleaſure in Truth, to feel the ſenſe of ſpecial love to your ſouls in diſcovery of light, and to find a mightineſs going out in every Truth on your ſouls, changing you into the very Spirit and Image of Truth: To grow in knowledge extenſively, into all Truth; and intenſively, in deeper and more ſenſible, ſpiritual, powerful apprehenſions of truth; the want of which right knowledge makes ſo many cold, dead hypocrites, and barren profeſſors in this day of light and parts.

Get alſo your Conſciences ſtor'd with the Peace of God, which paſſeth underſtanding. This is the ſalt that ſeaſons every thing, condition and duty, *Mark* 9. 50. This will ſhoe your feet to travel through the rough and tireſome waies of affliction, temptation and perſecution you muſt meet with in the purſuit of your Heavenly Trade, *Epheſ.* 6. 15. This will calm your hearts in ſtorms, and maintain a Summer within, when 'tis Winter without, and nothing but tempeſts and troubles in the world, *John.* 16. 33. This will preſerve you when all is going, and keep your hearts and minds through Chriſt Jeſus, *Phil.* 4. 7. This will guard your hearts from thoſe ſlaviſh fears, darkſom doubts, and dreadful troubles that many are filled with this day, and make you triumph over ſin, trample upon the world, and ſmile in the midſt of all the frowns of men and Devils. O get and keep this rare Jewel of inward Peace, which will help you to draw near to God with boldneſs, and chearful ſerenity in every duty, *Heb.* 10. 22. Get your conſciences bath'd in the blood of Chriſt, and

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the evidences of your sincerity cleared up every day; this will help to maintain a feast of inward peace under the temptations of Satan, and the view of your daily failings and stumblings.

Get your hearts warm'd, and affections quicken'd with the sense of divine love to your Souls: this is a choice part of heavenly treasures, and will abundantly conduce to the lively carrying on of this divine Trade; affections raised by the application of redemption-grace, will be to your Souls as spread sails to the Ship, to carry you strongly along against wind and storm, and fill you with pleasant gales within, and give you a speedy and comfortable passage through the waves of this world, 2 *Cor.* 5. 12. 'Tis the Souls wings that mounts it up towards God, and carries it aloft above the entanglements of sin, the world, and flesh, in the warm pursuit of God's commandments, 2 *Cor.* 5. 14. His commands will not be thought grievous, or his yoke heavy, where this love of God hath left a savour on the heart, *Psal.* 119. 32. *Rom.* 13. 10. It will exceedingly sweeten the bitter waters of *Marah* to you, and make the paths of Gods Providences, as well as his Precepts, pleasantness and peace.

Take in also the consolations of the Spirit, and the joys of the Holy Ghost, these will be useful to chear your hearts under tribulation, and strengthen and cordial you under heart-faintings and qualms you may meet with from those il' vapours of this lower World, and want of creature comforts, 2 *Cor.* 7. 4. *Rom.* 15. 4.

This

This ſpiritual comfort will alſo help to drown your carnal joys, and to prevent a ſurfeit with the pleaſures of this World, (another danger that Wiſdom's Merchants are ſometimes liable to.) *Acts* 2. 28. *Make me full of joy with the light of thy countenance.* Spiritual joy, where it is, fills the heart, and leaves no room for carnal delights: as the heat of the Sun puts out the fire, ſo will ſpiritual conſolation extinguiſh carnal joy: 'Twas the comfort which *Moſes*, by Faith, fetch'd in from the views of an inviſible God, that made him chooſe reproaches with the people of God, before the pleaſures of ſin that were but for a ſeaſon, *Heb.* 11. 21, 25. This ſpiritual comfort is a notable way to ſtability in every good work, 2 *Theſ.* 2. 16, 17. to help on your Souls edification and growth in grace and holineſs, *Acts* 9. 31.

O! what work have Chriſtians to do, beſides the World, and minding their own things? were Religion followed to the purpoſe, perſons would have no leiſure for ſin and vanity: O! what need have gracious Souls of a diligent hand to make them rich, and to be taking in ſpiritual goods every day.

Queſt. *But how ſhould I do to get my Soul furniſh'd with theſe heavenly goods? If my heart deceive me not, I would fain be enriched with every grace, capacity and accompliſhment, for the diſcharge of my duty, the pleaſing, honouring, and enjoying of God, and for the welfare of my immortal Soul: But how to attain this longed for mercy, I know not.*

Sol.

Sol. 1. If you would be enriched with heavenly treasures, and get in those goods: Then,

1. First, Maintain a constant sense of your own wants and emptiness: *That which is wanting cannot be numbred, Eccles.* 1. 15. Look over your souls every day, and see your poverty: look into your understandings, and see how little light is there: into your minds, and consider how little spirituality lies there: how little warmth and heavenly heat in your affections: little truth and sincerity in your spirits: little tenderness in your consciences: little flexibleness in your wills to divine things: little faith, love, humility, meekness, fear, zeal, life, strength, faithfulness, stedfastness in your souls: were this really seen, and felt, and the excellency of these spiritual perfections discern'd, and the soul's great concern and interest that lies wrapt up in them, with the absolute necessity of having every grace, in order to duty, peace, comfort, prosperity and salvation: persons that had any life at all, could not lie still, or be content, till utmost means were us'd to obtain supplies: 'twas a false conceit of a self-fulness that kept back *Laodicea* from seeking after Christ's treasures, *Rev.* 3. 17, 18. And that blind opinion the Pharisees had of their good estate that so prejudic'd them against the convictions and counsels of Christ towards their cure, *Joh.* 8. 33, 39. 41. 48. Had not the *Corinthian* Saints been so full and rich in their apprehensions, they would not have had such sleighty thoughts of instituted means towards their souls good. 1 *Cor.* 1. 12. And have been contentious with one another

another, when they ſhould have been contending for higher meaſures of grace and godlineſs, *v.* 11. 'Tis the poor are the labourers in God's Vineyard, *Zach.* 11. 11. And they that feel the daily need of ſoul-relief, that will be at any pains to enjoy it, *Iſa.* 41. 17.

Secondly, Get a believing ſight of Chriſt's grace and fulneſs, that he is able to enrich you, and willing to help you. *Heb.* 11. 6. This brought *Naaman* to the Prophet *Eliſha* for cure of his leproſie; he believed his ſervants report, that he was able, and cheriſhed hopes that he was willing to heal him. 2 *Kin.* 5. 3. *And ſhe ſaid to her Miſtreſs, would God my Maſter were with the Prophet that is in* Samaria, *for he would recover him of his leproſie*: One told this to her Lord, and hereupon he goes and adventures: *ver.* 5. *And he departed.* A perſwaſion of Chriſt's ability, brought the Leper to him for cleanſing. *Mat.* 8. 2. *Lord, if thou wilt, thou can'ſt make me clean*; He was perſwaded that Chriſt was able, and had hopes that he was willing, or elſe would never have come to him. A thorough belief of Chriſt's ability to help, will make a ſoul to cheriſh hopes of his willingneſs alſo. So the blind men, *Mat.* 9. they believed Chriſt's ability to help them; *ver.* 28. And they had hopes of his mercy too, that he would do it: *ver.* 27. *Thou Son of David have mercy upon us*: and this hope made them not only to come to Chriſt, but to follow after him: whatever perſons pretend to a believing in Chriſt's ability to ſave and ſanctifie them, they have not this faith, who queſtion his willingneſs

lingneſs to ſatisfie the longing ſoul, and ſave all that come to God by him: you confeſs he is able to furniſh you with all you can want or deſire; believe his willingneſs alſo to ſupply all your wants, who ſincerely wait upon him.

Queſt. *But how may I know that Chriſt will furniſh me if I come for theſe heavenly treaſures? there are many come, and go without their errand: Some ask, and have not*, Jam. 4. 3. *run, and receive not; ſtrive to enter in, and are not able*, 1 Cor. 9. 24. Luke 13. 24. *There are ſome the Lord threatens he will not hear*, Prov. 1. 28. Iſa. 1. 15. Zach. 7. 13. *And I have ſought theſe ſpiritual bleſſings many a time, and God hath not anſwered: How may I be ſure Chriſt is willing to give theſe treaſures unto me?*

Sol. The Lord Jeſus hath made an offer of grace to all ſenſible Sinners, who feel their need, and thirſt for ſupply, *Iſa.* 55. 1. *Joh.* 7. 37. and called upon them to come and receive it without exception, *Matth.* 11. 28. Now it cannot ſtand with his divine goodneſs and truth to offer mercy, and not intend to give it; he cannot deceive, or be deceived, who is the faithful one; nor invite his creatures to an expectation, and then fail them. Now he hath called all to come, and required no other condition but their coming, and receiving him and the things he hath offered. He hath alſo promiſed, as well as offered, to give to him that thirſteth. *Rev.* 20. 6. *I will give to him that is a-thirſt of the fountain*

of

of the water of life freely. I will give, (not ſell) or let out on any terms of ſelf-worthineſs; for if there be any thing to make the creature worthy, 'tis not a gift, but debt, *Rom.* 4. 4. (To him that is a-thirſt,) nothing elſe is required but a pinching ſenſe of ſouls need, and an unſatisfied deſire of ſupply. (I will give freely,) out of no reſpect to any thing in the creature, but his neceſſity and miſery; the moving cauſe is his own grace and free mercy to Sinners, as Sinners. (I will give liberally too;) let him drink freely, take as much as he needs, or is capable to receive. (I will give ſuitably,) ſuch things as you deſire and need, and ſuch things as are capable of ſatisfying you, (*of the fountain of the waters of life.*) *Mat.* 7. 7. *Pſal.* 36. 7, 8. *Joh.* 6. 37. *Iſa.* 41. 17. You will find nothing in theſe Scriptures required in the perſon, but ſenſe of his need, ſeeking ſatisfaction, coming, believing, and a real ſubjection to all God's terms, and a pure deſigning of his ends. I diſclaim all; the Port I would be in at, is redemption and forgiveneſs through his blood; *Ruth.* Now, if he hath promiſed to give to them that ſeek, he muſt be willing to give; *For the holy One of Iſrael cannot lye,* Numb. 23. 19. He hath received all his Mediatory fulneſs of purpoſe for the giving out to thoſe that come unto him. *Joh.* 1. 12. *Pſal.* 68. 18. *Thou haſt received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious alſo, that the Lord God might dwell amongſt them:* He is the Angel, Meſſenger and Mediator of the new Covenant, the Truſtee and Feoffee entruſted with that great eſtate for the uſe of his people

that

that need it, and come unto him for it, *Mat.* 3. 1. *Heb.* 9. 15. And therefore is ſaid to appear in Heaven in the preſence of God for them, as an Advocate to follow their cauſe. The Lord Jeſus is wonderfully pleaſed too, in giving to his needy ſeeking ones. *Mich.* 7. 18. He delighteth in mercy, *Pſal.* 35. 27. He hath pleaſure in the proſperity of his ſervants: the more he gives, the more he ſees of the travel of his ſoul, and is ſatisfied. *Iſa.* 53. 11. The more he gives, the more he receives: The gifts and graces of God are as the rivers that flow from the Sea, and return to the Sea again. 1 *Chron.* 29. 14. *Of thine own have I given thee*: The more Chriſt gives to his people the more he receives; his talents come in again with improvements, *Mat.* 25. 27. The more he gives, the more he is glorified, *Joh.* 14. 13. Anſwer theſe queſtions before you doubt Chriſt's willingneſs to part with ſpiritual goods freely to all that truly ſeek them. Do you think really that Chriſt can diſſemble, offer mercy, and have no mind to give it? Do you think that the Lord Jeſus can break his word, or become falſe to his promiſe? Can you imagine he will be unfaithful to his truſt? Can he delight in giving, and yet not willing? Doth he gain by giving, and yet not willing to give? Is he glorified by giving, and yet be loth to give? then would he not care for his own name. Suſpect your willingneſs to receive, not Chriſt's to give you all that grace you need and ſeek of him.

Fourthly, Another thing wherein this heavenly Trade lies, is, to carry on heavenly work, and

and to be daily driving on the great business of godliness. Religion hath its work as well as the world; every Trade hath its employment, and so has godliness. Christianity is not a notion or opinion, a name to live, and no more: 'Tis a miserable vanity and cheat for a person to think a bare Lamp will light him to Heaven, and a few lazy wishes bring him to glory, though he travel not the way to it. Alas, to espouse the principles of Piety, without the practice of it, to get over to pr vileges, and be strangers to Purity, to profess Faith without works, and love without labours, will signifie nothing towards salvation. Will Opinion make a man an Artist, or imagination enrich him, or hunger fill him, or reading the way to a place bring him thither? No more will affection, knowledge and profession help men to Heaven, unless they work out their salvation, and carry on the duties of Religion that lead to it, *Phil.* 2. 12.

First, Consider, a Christian hath much work, and a little time; great work, and small strength; necessary work, and many diversions; excellent work, none like it: persons that set about salvation in earnest, will find much to do; and the farther they go in Religion, the more busie their employment will be: every day brings its work with it; new instructions, new mercies, new afflictions and temptations every day, which calls for much exercised grace and duty. A child of God hath no time for idleness, or impertinent business. O the many things that must be dispatched within the compass of this little inch of time for eternity! Soul, if thou diest, and thy

thy work undone when thou dieſt, thy ſoul's undone; there's no riſing from thy grave to do neglected work; or diſpenſation at the Bar of God for the omiſſion of Salvation duties.

This work is neceſſary alſo as well as great; ſome duties are neceſſary to ſecure thy ſalvation; all duties are neceſſary to maintain thy comforts, and greaten thy glory. Men plead neceſſity for this and th'other thing, to do this work, and take that journey; to omit this duty, and abſent from ſuch a priviledge; but who is ſenſible of the neceſſity of working the work of God, and attending ſoul-concerns? It may not be neceſſary you ſhould have peace, credit, plenty, riches, comforts; that you ſhould have ſo much eſtate, preferment and contentment in the world; but 'tis abſolutely neceſſary thy ſoul ſhould be ſaved, and that God ſhould be obeyed; that ſpiritual concerns ſhould be attended, (whatever is neglected) that thy debts ſhould be paid, thy peace with God obtained, thy hungry ſoul be fed and refreſhed, thy title to Heaven clear'd, the preſence of God enjoy'd, and thy ſeed-time for glory improv'd.

'Tis promiſed-work too, and that makes it neceſſary: you have engag'd to be the Lord's if you are Chriſtians; and have given up your ſelves to be his, and not your own; your time is his, your capacities his, 1 *Cor.* 6. 19, 20. what you are and have, is from him and for him; this you have devoted to the uſe and ſervice of God, when you took him to be your God, 2 *Cor.* 8. 5. and many a time ſince you have engag'd to obedience of his commands: There are ſick-bed-

vows, affliction-promises, engagements under conscience-troubles; yea every day, and in every duty, you tell God you will mend your waies, redeem your time, do him more and better work; and how can you stand before him with such flattery and dissimulation, and under the guilt of so much falshood and treachery, while your work lies still undone?

Yea your work, Christians, is excellent work also, above all the employments of the world: 'tis supernatural work, yea Angelical work, yea such work as Angels cannot do, to believe in, love, converse with, and obey Christ, as your Redeemer and Saviour, *Phil.* 3. 10. 1 *Pet.* 1. 7, 8, 9, 12. to suffer for Christ, and be baptized into a conformity with his death and resurrection.

'Tis suitable work also you are called to in this Heavenly Trade, work suited to your natures: If you are Saints, you have received a heavenly spirit, and are partakers of the Divine Nature, 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. 'Tis as natural for you to do heavenly work, if you are Christians, as for the world to do earthly work, there being a disposition and propensity put into your renewed natures to new and heavenly work, as there is a disposition in the seed to its proper fruit, 1 *Joh.* 3. 9. *For his seed remaineth in him*: 'Tis work suited to your hopes which are laid up in Heaven, *Col.* 1. 5. *For the hope which is laid up for you in Heaven, whereof you have heard before in the word of Truth.* That is the blessedness, those great and glorious things you hope for, which are laid up for you in Heaven, as a Treasure safely

ſafely kept for you: *Called hope by an Antonomaſia* (ſaith *Davenant*) (a) *This reward is not ſaid to be onely offered and propoſed to us; for that would weaken our hope, if the certainty of thoſe things hoped for did depend on us, and our diſpoſition; ſo that it ſhould be given or denied us according to the worth of our works, graces and duties: but 'tis ſaid to be laid aſide for us, as that which is depoſited, and ſafely laid up in God our Father for us.* A Chriſtian's choiceſt Treaſures lie in hope, not in hand; beyond their preſent view and enjoyment, and yet ſecured to their uſe and propriety, 1 *Pet.* 1. 4. *Reſerved in Heaven for you*: (τετηρημένην) kept as it were in cuſtody, and with watch and ward for you ſure and certain, on which the hopes of Believers are firmly laid, and to which their preſent work is ſuited: heavenly work bears a proportion and agreement in its nature (though not in worth) to heavenly and eternal things; 'tis work ſuited to your inheritance and wages in its kind, though not in degree: and that's excellent work which is of the ſame Nature with your Eternal Bleſſedneſs.

Suited alſo to your preſent priviledges, who ſit in Heavenly Places in Chriſt Jeſus, *Eph.* 2. 6. Gracious Souls, though in Habitation they are

(a) *Beatitudo promiſſa dicitur ſpes noſtra, id eſt, illud quod ſperamus, per Antonomaſiam; neque hoc præmium dicitur tantum oblatum nobis & propoſitum, nam hoc ſpem noſtram infirmaret, ſi certitudo rerum ſperatarum penderet ex nobis, & diſpoſitione noſtra ita ut vel daretur nobis vel negaretur pro merito operum noſtrorum, ſed dicitur ſepoſitum nobis, id eſt, quaſi in depoſito reconditum apud Deum Patrem noſtrum.* Daven.

on the Earth, yet in point of priviledge they ſit in Heaven: *Through their union with Chriſt they may be ſaid* (*b*) (ſaith *Zanchy*) *to ſit where he ſits, as a Husband or Brother abſent from his Wife, and Brethren doth poſſeſs a kingdom for them; they, though abſent, may be truly ſaid relatively to poſſeſs it in him as members in the head, they ſit in Heaven in the perſon of Chriſt; and as the lump is ſanctified in the firſt fruits*: Neither do they ſit onely relatively through their union with Chriſt; but ſpiritually, through their communion with him. In that ſenſe (ſaith *Bucer*) as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Phil.* 3. 20. They have their converſation in Heaven. This is a glorious priviledge the Saints onely enjoy; in this life to converſe in Heaven, and to have their life above, above the world, and things below, and ſuch ſhould their work be alſo: How pleaſant ſhould heavenly work be to heavenly ſouls! which Believers are and ſhould be.

Secondly, Chriſtians ſet upon heavenly work; for as is your work, ſo will your maintenance be: They who do that work which the world cannot, have that meat and drink which the world knoweth not, *Joh.* 4. 32, 34. The Lord hath dainties, and peculiar refreſhments for thoſe who are ſingle and faithful in his work, *they have joyes which ſtrangers intermeddle not with*, *Prov.* 14. 10. Whoever go without, his labourers ſhall not lack: He keeps a good table for his workmen: *In keeping of his commands*

(*b*) *Sedere fecit nos in cœleſtibus in perſona Chriſti, inquo novam vitam excitavit, & ut ſpiritu in cœlis verſemur effecit.* Zanch.

there's

there's great reward, *Psal.* 19. 11. *They eat the fat, and drink the sweet*, *Neh.* 8. 10. The marrow, the spiced wine, the hidden Manna is their meat and drink (so far as they have need of it) O the sweet bits, and pleasant sips they miss of, who are idle in God's Vineyard! *They that will not work, shall not eat*, 2 *Thes.* 3. 10. Would you live high in your spiritual comforts, then work hard in your spiritual work.

Thirdly, As is your work, so will your company be: They that do earthly work, have earthly companions to labour with them: As is mens Trade, such is their company. *The children of the night have their fellowship with unfruitfull works of darkness*, *Ephes.* 5. 11. and gracious souls are *companions with them that fear God*, *Psal.* 119. 63. Wicked workers have wicked men and devils casting in their lot with them, *Prov.* 1. 14. And so have heavenly Traders heavenly company; they have the presence of God with them, 2 *Chron.* 15. 2. *The Lord is with you, while you are with him*: They have the Comforter with them, *Joh.* 14. 16 *He shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever*: *Rom.* 8. 11. *By his Spirit that dwelleth in you.* No company like the Comforter: friends may leave you, but if you keep with God, and do his will, the Spirit of God will abide with you for ever: though he may not alwaies be seen of you, yet he will alwaies reside with you: At the best, friends can but stay with you, but the Spirit of Christ will dwell in you, and give you the neerest and most intimate acquaintance with himself (if you obey his voice, and follow

him) God's labourers have the company of Angels alſo: *they are miniſtring ſpirits to the heirs of ſalvation, Heb.* 1. 14. *They pitch their tents about them that fear God, Pſal.* 34. 7. and have it given in charge to take care of the Children of God, *and to carry them in their arms, that they daſh not their feet againſt a ſtone, Pſal.* 91. 11. Thoſe are lovely company indeed, ſuch as will never hurt you, but do you good; you ſhall be the better for them, *Prov.* 13. 20.

Fourthly, As is your work, ſo will your wages be to all eternity: though not for your work, yet according to it, *Rom.* 2. 6. *Who ſhall render to every man according to his deeds:* κατὰ τὰ ἔργα not διὰ τὰ ἔργα, *according to*, not *for their works*: The Propoſition διὰ, noting here (ſaith *Paræus*) (*c*) not the merit, but the meaſure, analogy or rule, by which undeſerved rewards ſhall be diſtributed, and juſt puniſhments ſhall be inflicted, as the word is uſed, *Mat.* 9. 29. *ch.* 23. And ſo as it refers to glory (ſaith he) it rather deſcribes the perſon to whom this glory ſhall be given, then ſhews the cauſe why it is given, as *Mat.* 25. 34, 35. Alſo the word rendered (ἀποδώσει) is uſed for a free reward that hath no reſpect to deſert, *Mat.* 20. 8. The ſame reward being given to him that wrought one hour, as to thoſe that bore the heat and burden of the day: So that the word (*according*) notes the kind of work, not the cauſe of reward

(*c*) Κατὰ non meritum ſignificat, ſed menſuram seu ἀναλογίαν, qua præmia diſtribuentur indebita & pœnæ irrogandæ promeritæ. Paræus. *Non propter quid, ſed quibus ſit danda docetur.* Idem.

reward

reward as it refers to salvation: suitable to that of Christ, *Rev.* 22. 32. *Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be:* ἀποδῶναι ἑκάστῳ, ὡς τὸ ἔργον ἐστὶν αὐτοῦ ἔσται. Indeed evil works have their causality, and desert of punishment, but not good works of reward: *Gryner* gives three reasons of the difference: First, Because good works proceed from God, and are the fruits of his Spirit in us; but evil works proceed from man, and are the effects of his own spirit and will. Secondly, good works are imperfectly good as to degrees, and therefore cannot merit; but evil works are perfectly evil, and therefore deserve death. Thirdly, Good works are commanded, and so are but our duty, and cannot merit, (payment of debts are not purchase) but sins are forbidden, and so are a breach of the Law of God, and deserve death. *Luke* 17. 10. *The gift of God is eternal life, but the wages of sin is death, Rom.* 6. 23. Death is wages due, but life is a gift altogether free. *By grace ye are saved, Ephes.* 2. 5. There can be no desert of glory in the most spiritual duties of man: Because

First, They are not man's work, but God's in him, *John* 15. 5. *Without me ye can do nothing, Gal.* 2. 20. *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.* Holiness is called the fruit of the Spirit, *Ephes.* 5. 9. Now the reward is due by way of debt to him that worketh; but to him that worketh not, 'tis of grace, *Rom.* 4. 4, 5. and therefore reward is not due to Saints who work not, but by strict way of justice ra-

ther to the ſpirit that worketh in them.

Secondly, They are no way proportionable to the reward, and ſo not meritorious: Their work is imperfect, they know but in part, and do but in part, 1 *Cor.* 3. 9. *Phil.* 3. 12. The beſt duties as they come from the Saints here, are ſpotty, and as ſweet waters that come from an evil veſſel, they ſavour of the cask through which they come: but glory is perfect, *omnibus modis*, and hath no defect in it; Our works alſo are finite, being created, and creature-actions: but the reward is infinite, the love and glory of an infinite God.

Thirdly, Though our Holineſs were perfect, yet it could not merit; becauſe it is due to God from that relation we bear to him as his creatures, and redeemed ones, and from our promiſe and covenant with him to love, obey and ſerve him, *Epheſ.* 2. 10. 2 *Cor.* 8. 5. Duties are but debts, not acts of favour to God: We owe God our ſelves, and our all, and are indebted to Chriſt for his Redemption grace, more than we can ever pay: we cannot (though we do all we poſſible can) requite the blood of Chriſt, and love of Chriſt: and till we are out of debt we cannot merit.

Fourthly, We have nothing to merit withal, for we are not our own, 1 *Cor.* 6. 19. Man hath nothing to give to God, who is not his own, but God's (as all redeemed ones eſpecially are.) Believers are his ſervants: *Rom.* 14. 4. *Who are thou that judgeſt another man's ſervant?* And a ſervant is not his own: his time, ſtrength, capacity, work, are his Maſters: ſo are the Saints duties

duties the Lord's, not by way of legal compact, and requital of wages, but by way of redemption, right and purchase, being bought out of the service of sin and Satan to his own use: and the service of such is a due already upon a former score: a debt of thankfulness, and cannot merit a reward: Besides what can they give to God, who have nothing but what they receive from God? 1 *Cor.* 4. 7. *Who hath first given to him? and it shall be recompensed to him again: for of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory for ever.*

Fifthly, Were rewards due to any upon the account of his work, then man had something to glory of in himself, and might say of Heaven as *Nebuchadnezzar* did of *Babylon*, *Dan.* 4. 30. *Is not this great Babylon which I have built for the house of the Kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my Majesty?* So might such say when they come to Heaven: Is not this the mansion I prepared and deserved by my duties and graces, for my glory and blessedness? For self-justiciaries, though they are forced to say that their grace is given of God: yet they boast of the improvements of this grace as theirs, and glory is due to the improvement of grace (they say) and not to the bare grace or talent: and though they are driven to confess Christ's merit, yet they shuffle and say, Christ merited for them, that they might merit: But that is contrary to the Gospel, which tells us, That *'tis not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy*, *Rom.* 9. *v.* 16, *And 'tis God that worketh in you both to*

will

will and to do of his good pleasure, Phil. 2. 13. *And that no flesh should glory in his presence,* 1 *Cor.* 1. 29. *And therefore God hath chosen the foolish, weak and base things of this world, and things that are not, of purpose to prevent this self-glorying before him, verse* 17, 18. And the Apostle makes this reason why *Abraham* was not justified by Works, but by Faith, cause then he would have something to glory in; but this could not be. *Rom.* 4. 2. *If Abraham were justified by works, he had something to glory in, but not before God.* So that the Saints, though they have a reward of their work, yet it is not for their work; 'tis a reward, not of debt, but of grace; yea of glorious grace, *according to your work.* (Christians) God will not give you a jot less than the utmost of what your love and faithfulness comes to; *Your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord,* 1 *Cor.* 15. 58. He will not fail of any of his Promises, or disappoint you of your expected end, but will be better than your hopes: You will say in that day of compensation, *Who hath begotten me all these? Isa.* 49. 21. *Whence is this to me? Luk.* 1. *v.* 43. *When saw we thee an hungred? Mat.* 26. *v.* 37. Glory is a mighty thing, infinitely above all your labours: Christians, Heaven will make amends for all your duties and losses, and abundantly compensate, and exceed all your expences for God in the world: And have you not reason to set about the work of grace, and drive on the employments of this Heavenly Trade?

Quest.

Quest. *But what is this heavenly work which Wisdom's Merchants must be driving on every day?*

Sol. I answer; First, in the general; Heavenly work is that work which hath a heavenly Author and Principle; a heavenly rule, and a heavenly end: work wrought of God by his Spirit, *Joh.* 3. 21. Work done according to the will of God, and by Scripture rule, *Col.* 4. 12. Work wrought for God, and designed purely and ultimately to his glory, 2 *Cor.* 10. 31.

But more particularly, heavenly works may be considered under these two heads.

First, Such as are heavenly in the matter of them, as well as manner and end.

Secondly, Such works, as though earthly in the matter of them, yet are done in a heavenly manner, and to an heavenly end.

First, That's heavenly work which is of a heavenly nature, matter, and manner, and end; as all those religious duties are which respect God, our selves, and others.

First, Drive on that work every day which hath God himself for its first and more immediate object, as all acts of religious worship, both natural and instituted, moral and positive. *Mat.* 4. 10. *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*: This is due to God from all his rational and intelligent creatures, both men and Angels to worship him only, with that reverential fear, faith, love, hope and delight which is due to him, as the Supreme

preme Majesty of Heaven and Earth, the great Creator and Conservator of all his creatures; and to serve him with that subjection and obedience as their relation to God their Sovereign calls for. This is the duty of all persons, especially those that profess their owning of God, and choice of him to be their God in Christ, and peculiar treasure. *Deut.* 13. 6. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and serve him, and swear by his name.* Christians, to let out your hearts upon the world, relations, self, and creatures, is to rob God of his service, and to commit Idolatry with the creature. Think this, when my heart runs out to things below God, and my affections, hope, trust and delight get over their banks, and break their due bounds, and subordinacy to God: when I fondly dote upon, and take pleasure (abstractively from God) in any creatures, then do I deal treacherously with my God, I rob him, and give his glory to another, *Isa.* 48. 11. O set habitually your hearts on God, and let out your faith, love, hope, fear, desires, and delighting pleasures on God every day, yea all the day long, as your chiefest good, supreme Sovereign, and last end. *Prov.* 23. 17. *Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long.*

Again, external acts of divine worship are part of thy every days work, which thou owest to God, and to be duly and daily performed to him; as to pray, hear, and read his sacred word: These are that honour, homage and service that is due to God every day, especially morning and evening; *Prov.* 8. 34. *Deut.* 6. 7. *Exod.* 30. 7. 1 *Chron.* 23. 30. *Ezek.* 46. 13, 14, 15.

Amos

Amos 4.4. 1 *Chron.* 16. 40, *Pſal.* 55. 17. This is the daily burnt-offering to be prepared for the Lord; *Exod.* 29. 38, 39. Morning and evening; the vows that are to be daily performed. *Pſal.* 61. 8. God's mercies are new every morning, and ſo muſt your praiſes be alſo. *Lam.* 3. 23. He keeps you day and night. *Iſa.* 27. 3. And 'tis but reaſonable you ſhould give him his morning and evening ſacrifice: you depend upon him for the mercies of every day, and he expects from you the duties of every day, which is reaſonable ſervice. *Rom.* 12. 1. You have daily neceſſities, difficulties, trials, dangers and duties, in which you need his help; and is it not your concern to be daily at his feet, and ſeeking his favour, counſel, ſtrength and bleſſing?

Herein lies your profeſſed ſubjection to God alſo; ſlight religious duties, and you reject God from being your God: This very reaſon doth *Moſes* give why *Iſrael* ſhould ſerve the Lord, and cleave to him, and ſwear by his name, and give him all religious worſhip, *Deut.* 10. 20, 21. *He is thy praiſe, and he is thy God, who hath done for thee theſe great and terrible things which thine eyes have ſeen.* Dan. 6. 16. *Thy God whom thou ſerveſt continually, he will deliver thee:* 'Tis a contradiction to ſay that God is your God, and yet with-hold his ſervice from him: As ſoon as ever God had a people in the World, he had ſervice from them. *Gen.* 4. 26. *Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord:* No ſooner had *Seth* (who was the other ſeed which the Lord appropriated to himſelf in the room

room of *Abel*) a Son and Family, but they had a peculiar worſhip for God, and were diſtinguiſhed from the Family of *Cain* by this, that they did ſerve God: This is the work of God, that every Soul is bound to diſpatch every day, in Cloſet and Family, in Spirit and Truth, with a pure heart fervently.

This alſo is the beſt part of your work in the world, to attend on God; all other ſervice is but drudgery, compared with your ſerving God, and tranſacting the great matters of your Souls, and your everlaſting concern. This is your intereſt alſo, to maintain nearneſs to God, who is the life of your ſouls, the length of your days, and fountain of all your ſupplies; there's no ſuch pleaſure as in the ways of God, nor profit as in keeping his commands. O the bleſſedneſs of converſe with God, and maintaining a dayly entercourſe with the Father of Spirits! 'tis the priviledge of Angels, and of glorified Saints, to be always beholding his face, 1 *Theſ.* 4. 17. *Mat.* 18. 10. And the peculiar honour of the upright to dwell in his preſence, *Pſal.* 140. 12.

There is no ſuch advantage alſo as to be much with God every day, *Pſal.* 73. 28. *'Tis good for me to draw near to God:* Often journeys to Heaven bring in much profit; 'twas this way *David* did thrive ſo much in wiſdom, grace and experience, out-ſhining all the men of that age, and ſerving his generation by the will of God; *his being much with God.* Pſal. 139. 18. *When I awake I am ſtill with thee:* By this nearneſs to the Son of righteouſneſs did *Enoch* ſo ſoon

soon ripen for Heaven; and by his constant walks with God, did he so timely get to his journeys end. Of all that generation, we find none so soon sent for home, and translated to his rest, as holy *Enoch*; for whereas the rest lived nine hundred, eight hundred, seven hundred years: only he lived three hundred sixty and five years, and that which so quickned his fitness for rest, was his activity in heavenly work: *Enoch walked with God, and was not, for God took him, Gen.* 5. 23. He kept his constant turns with God in his Garden and Gallery-walks, and then went in with him into his Presence-Chamber, there to sit down with him for ever.

This also will make you thrive in your own work, if you are faithful and diligent in God's work; mind his concerns, and he will care for yours, *Deut.* 30 9. *Obey the voice of the Lord, and do all his commandments, and the Lord thy God will make thee plenteous in every good work of thy hand*; He shall make thee to abound in the work of thy hand; (as 'tis in the *Hebrew*) (*) to have more than enough, (as *Montanus* renders it,) He will bless thee in every work of thine hand, (according to the Septuagint,) other Copies have it; He will have a great deal of care of thee, &c. *He will make thee excellent with good things*, (saith *Junius*:) *He will make thee to enjoy good in every work of*, &c. (saith *Symmachus*) He shall prosper the work of thy hand: It shall go well with such. *Deut.*

(*) והותירך & *faciet superesse te*, ευλογησει πολυωρησει σε, *excellentem efficiet te bonis.*

4. 40. *Thou shalt keep therefore his statutes and his commandments which I command thee this day, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, Gen.* 42. 18. 'Twas piety made *Joseph* so prosperous in all he did, he feared God. *Do this, and live; for I fear God*: and God was with him, and made all he did to prosper in his hand, *Gen.* 39. 3. *Whatsoever he doth shall prosper, Psal.* 1. 3. The blessing of the Lord shall be on the head and hands of such; let their condition be what it will in the world, yet it shall be well with such as fear the Lord; if he be afflicted, yet his afflictions shall turn to his good, and be part of his prosperity. 2 *Chron.* 31. 21. *And in every work he began in the service of the House of God, and in the Law, and in the Commandment, to seek his God; he did it with all his heart, and prospered.* The way to true prosperity leads by Heaven-gates. Christians, if ever you will thrive in your own work, be sure to carry on God's work: begin with God every day, the first fruits are his. Dispatch religious worship in your Closets and Families before you enter on your earthly business: Close up every day with him, he is the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and end, and must have the issue as well as entrances of every day. The morning and evening sacrifice are his, 1 *Chron.* 16. 40. 2 *Chron.* 13. 11. *Psal.* 55. 17. Give God his due, before you render to nature its dues. *Psal.* 61. 8. Pay your vows to God every evening, before you run on score for new mercies: See all things secured in everlasting Arms before you lie down to rest; put thy

thy Soul and thy All into the hands of Christ by solemn devotion and resignation every night; get the watch set, and all things safe, before thou exposest thy self to the hazards of the night, and interest upon an incapacity to secure thy self from the least danger. O precious souls! lye not down as dogs and swine, who, when they have filled their bellies, get to their styes and kennels.

Secondly, carry on all that work daily which hath a more special respect to your own selves, and leads to the sanctifying, comforting, strengthning, edifying, saving of your precious souls. Next to the glory of God, yea in pursuance of it, thy own Salvation is thy chief concern; *What will it profit a man to gain the whole World, and to lose his own Soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his Soul?* What is left, if the Soul be lost? and what is done, if, after all, the Soul be undone? To look after others Souls, and neglect thy own; and to secure all things else, and leave destruction on thy self; is folly like to hers that saved her goods from the fire, but left her child to perish in the flames. Salvation is your chiefest work, committed to your care, and to be accounted for in the day of Christ. *Phil.* 2. 12. *Work out your own Salvation with fear and trembling.* And 'tis great work also, many things must be attended too, and several things dispatched, if ever souls be saved.

First, You must carry on heart-work every day, and that's great work: they that are acquainted with their own hearts, know there

is much to do in and about them: There is no thing more out of order than man's heart, and nothing in man of greater concernment than the heart: Hence 'tis the strict charge the Lord gives his people to keep their hearts, *Prov.* 4. v. 23. *Above all Keeping* (as 'tis in the Hebrew) *keep thy heart*, *Prov.* 23. 2. *Ephes.* 3. 17. *Prov.* 4. v. 4. The heart is the one thing Christ looks for; the chief room he dwells in; his warehouse, where he lays up his goods; his workhouse, where he cuts out, and prepares his work, *Prov.* 16. 1. A great part of Salvation work is done in the secret chambers of the heart: The heart is the root and spring in man whence all acceptable duties flow; *Ephes.* 6. 6. *doing the will of God from the heart*; and to be especially looked after. A Christian finds a great deal of work to do about his heart every day: There is

Heart-searching work, *Psal.* 64. 6. The heart of man is deep, and not easily fathom'd; 'tis a long journey to the farthest end of the heart, which no man ever yet reached in this life: The Sea is deep, and yet it hath a bottom: The World is large, and yet it hath been compassed; but who hath ever travelled through his own heart, to set up his *non ultrà*, and say, Hitherto its wickedness goes, and no farther. *'Tis deceitful also above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?* *Jer.* 17. 9. A man hath no such cheater to deal with as his own heart; it hath such *Camelion* colours, *Meander* windings; such labyrinth turnings, subtle shifts, false pretences, close designs, fair promises, smooth excuses,

excuses, rhetorical pleas, seeming integrity, deep-rooted hypocrisie, that a man cannot tell what to make of his heart, or how to find it out; and this calls for constant searchings and observings of the heart: Besides, the Lord gives his people the ballance of the Sanctuary on purpose to weigh it in, and casts out a line of providence every day to try it by. Men meet with occasional providences, temptations, employments, companies, changes, mercies, afflictions; all which help to discover the heart; the issue of which is to be observed in order to the finding out of thy heart.

Heart-judging work: When Christians have found out the evil of their hearts, their pride, hypocrisie, &c. seen the proof and evidence clear, and how contrary to Law and Gospel, to Equity and Mercy, to Light, Experience, Warnings, Patience, Profession and Promises, they are then to charge these things upon the heart, to set home the evil with all the aggravations of it, from its nature and effects, from the quality of the person, the time, place, continuance in it, attempts and means of cure, compared with others beneath them for light, profession, means and mercies; and having by these arguments convinced the heart of its exceeding evil, then to pass sentence against, and condemn it as unworthy of any mercy, and deserving of all the threatnings in the Word against it, until the heart come to bear its iniquity, and feel its exceeding sinfulness, and cry out with the Apostle, *O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* Rom. 7. 24. This would

be of wonderful use to clear up your sincerity, to preserve the tenderness of your spirits, to cut off all excuses, false hopes, and security in sin, and make it more abominable when it appears with its most taking allurements, 2 *Cor.* 7. 11. 1 *Cor.* 11. 31. and this would evidence your interest in pardon, and freedom from Divine condemnation.

Heart-humbling work. O the pride that lodges, yea lives in, and incorporates with this little piece the heart of man! how unsearchable is it, and past finding out! like leaven in the lump, and poyson in the cup, which cannot be separated by a humane hand; as rottenness in the bones, that cannot be fetched out. Pride is as that lofty mountain before *Zerubbabel*, which must become a plain, *Zach.* 4. 7. as deeply rooted trees, whose Mores are not easily plucked up. One compares spiritual pride to the shirt, or inmost garment, which the Saints last of all put off; and which like the Ivy, will not be pluckt out, till the wall in which it is comes down also. O the ruggings a child of God hath with his proud heart, to get and keep it low! As the Spider, whatever it feeds on it turns to poison: So is it with the proud heart of man; it turns all it does, hath, meets with, and sees to the nourishment of pride; proud of its sins; proud of his graces; proud under afflictions, and proud of mercies; proud of honour, and proud of humility; proud of God's favour, and proud under his frowns. O what a strange disease is pride, that feeds upon the means which the Lord gives to cure it, and gets strength from

from the remedy to nourish the disease! like *Ephraim's* wound; when God would have healed one, another appeared: And this helps to make a Christian's work great work indeed, which is never done till his day be done, and his Tabernacle pulled down.

Heart-purging work: The heart of man naturally is a very sink and kennel of uncleanness; a fountain of pollution; a running Issue full of filthiness of flesh and spirit, *Mat.* 18. 1. *Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies; these are the things that defile the man.* 'Tis not accidental and adventitious filthiness, for that may more easily be washt away, *Jer.* 6. 7. but 'tis innate and connatural, and never ceases bubling forth, till the fountain be cleansed, and the root be changed. Sin in the heart is the root and spring of all the wickedness that defiles the thoughts, words and actions. Christians complain of their thoughts; they are pestered with vain, unclean, distracting thoughts in duty, and out of duty; whereas the distemper lies in the heart: Thoughts are but the ebullitions and swarmings of the heart: He that will cure his thoughts, must first cleanse his heart, *Jer.* 4. 14. The heart is the nest where these Wasps fly out and trouble the soul; the root that feeds these luxuriant branches, briars and thorns that wound the conscience; and the strong fort of *Sion*, where these *Jebusites* hide themselves, and issue out to prey upon the gracious soul: Till the nests be spoiled, the Ax laid to the root of the tree, and this strong Tower attacked, all

these blind and lame removed, souls will never be freed from irruptions of sin in their thoughts and conversations. This (Christian) is busie and hard work, and part of thy daily employment in this Heavenly Trade; to sweep, wash, drain and cleanse thy filthy heart, by sound repentance and faith in the promises, death and blood of Christ.

Heart-quickning work. The heart is the *primum mobile*, the great wheel in the Watch that sets all a going; if that stop, all faculties are still: A lively heart makes a diligent hand to rid away soul-work, and a nimble foot to run in the waies of Gods Command; when the heart is quickened, then every duty, inward, outward, publick, private goes on; such a soul needs no spur to quicken it, nor pully to draw it to its duties. O what a burden are some to their Christian friends, to keep them up, and draw them on in the way of God, and all because their hearts are dead, and that liveliness which once seem'd to be in them is departed! The spring that at first made them so active, is weakened or broken; the waters that set their Mills a going fail, and that temporary love, and common grace, like standing pools having no fountain to maintain them, are dried up by consuming lusts, and scorching temptations; so that now they wither in all their branches, and become weak, cold, and indisposed to every work of God and their souls. Some of these dangerous symptoms of decayed grace, are found also in sincere souls, for not looking after their hearts betimes, and keeping them close to a quick-

quickening Jesus, by a lively faith in the promises. Christian, mind this also every day, to maintain thy spiritual life, by fresh quickenings, and reviving influences, from the fountain of life, on thy weak and dying heart, making use of all instituted helps for soul-strengthening; as hearing, reading, meditation, holy conference, and the like.

Heart-teaching and enlightening work. A light head, and a dark heart may dwell together; and it seems to be the condition of too many under the Gospel this day. A spiritual eye to look into the mystery of truth, and believing affectionate discerning of excellent things, is not easily found; even while Christ is read, a veil is on mens minds, and their foolish heart is darkened: And this is one reason souls walk not as children of light; 'tis because they are not light in the Lord, *Psal.* 40. 8. The Law of God is not within their hearts; they have no inclination or power upon their hearts to do the will of God they know, for want of this heart-knowledge! Be earnest with God to beam over your hearts, to make that the Hemisphere where the Sun of Righteousness may daily arise with healing in his wings: Cry with *David*, *Psal.* 119. 36. *Incline my heart to thy Law*: Let my heart lean and stay upon thy Law, as a man doth upon a staff to bear him up: Get a greater nearness in your hearts to truth, that the Word may be wrought in, and incorporated into your hearts; that it may be a *Goshen*, a Land of Vision, and full of the understanding of the Lord.

Heart-keeping and heart-watching work. The heart is bent to backſliding, if it be not kept and held faſt to the Lord and his waies; 'tis ſtill turning aſide, and winding off from its proper duty. The Lord complains of *Iſrael*, *Pſal.* 78. 8. *They did not ſet their heart aright, and their ſpirit was not ſteadfaſt with God:* They did not prepare, adapt, diſpoſe their heart to God; neither was it conſtant and ſtedfaſt with him, but on every occaſion did ſtart aſide: So falſe a thing is man's heart, if not under a watchful eye, and ſtrong hand, holding it faſt to God, *Prov.* 4. 23. *Keep thy heart with all diligence*: Keep it as under lock and key, bolted againſt ſin, and bound by cords of love to every duty: And what a hard Province is this! O the work that a child of God hath to keep his heart in order one moment; to keep down ſin; to keep it from the power of corruption, and prevalency of temptation; to keep up grace in the heart: to maintain its deſires after God, and things that are excellent: to preſerve its affections to things above: to hold the thoughts on God, and things eternal, that they ſtart not away: to continue its integrity: to perform its purpoſes: to ſecure its frames, experiences and enjoyments! And he that will thus keep his heart, muſt watch it conſtantly, never have his eye off from it, or ſuffer his jealouſie concerning it to ceaſe: He muſt be alwaies making it over to the Lord Jeſus for ſecurity, and be ſtill imploring help from Heaven, faithfully following all the inſtructions he gives towards its ſecuring: This is heart-work, and the firſt part

of

of this heavenly work that concerns your selves.

Secondly, You must carry on mortification-work every day, *Col.* 3. 5. *Mortifie therefore your members which are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness which is Idolatry.* The Apostle having assur'd the believing *Colossians* of their future happiness, doth thence infer their duty and necessity to press after utmost holiness here, as the way to this blessedness: The first part of which holiness lies in this great work of mortification: there is no greater motive for Believers putting off sin, than well-grounded hopes of interest in Christ and glory: if Heaven be yours hereafter, holiness must be yours now: There is no place for sin in Heaven, nor unclean thing can enter there. Then hasten away sin now; that's his Argument: (Mortifie your members:) Get your selves rid of sin: put to death, weaken and destroy the whole body of sin, with all the parts and issues of it: the head and ruling power of sin had its mortal wound before: *vers.* 3. *Ye are dead*: habitually dead to sin, the world, and self: they have got their deaths-wound, the stab is at the heart, and can never be healed more: but they are not actually dead, more blood must run, and spirits be spent, and this monster be weakned every day: Practical mortification is wanting, and must be promoted daily. *This spiritual death to sin* (a) (saith *Davenant*) *is not as*

(a) *Mors naturalis est pura privatio nec admittit in subjecto aliquid contrarii sed mortificatio spiritualis non est pura*

tura privatio, nam dum corpus hoc mortale gestamus relinquitur aliquid de contrario fomite, quod oppugnandum & magis magisq; mortificandum est. Daven.

the natural death; for that's a pure privation, and admits of nothing in the subject that's contrary to it: But spiritual mortification is not purely privative, but while we live there's something left that is of a contrary nature to holiness, which must be daily opposed and destroyed. Sin in Believers is driven from the royal fort of the heart upon Christ's entrance into it, but possesses the suburbs and out-works of the soul, from whence it must be gradually expell'd also by the mortifying influence of the Spirit; like the *Canaanites* which were remov'd from the Mountains, but could not be wholly driven out of the Valleys, that *Israel* might by them be prov'd, and taught to war, *Judg.* 1. 19. *ch.* 3. 1, 2. So the Lord Jesus Christ doth not presently destroy corruptions from the people, that by them their sincerity may be proved, their graces exercised, and the mighty power of his Spirit manifested: This makes a Christian's work busie, and constant, having to do with potent enemies within and without, *Eph.* 6. 4. which must be fought every day, and a continual war maintained with them during life: without fighting, no conquering; without striving, no crowning, 2 *Tim.* 2. 5. 'Tis with a child of God, as with *Israel* when fighting with *Amalek*, if the hands of Faith and Prayer be not held up, no conquest; when these are down, Spiritual *Amalek* prevails. O the losses that Christians sustain for want of mortification, by reason of which

their

their foil'd corruptions rally up, and take their graces captive! *Let men neglect the constant practice of mortification*, (b) (saith Davenant) *and their vices that were trod down and subdued, will soon resume their strength; their corruption that was lopt off will bud out again, and the graces of the Spirit in them being almost strangled, man returns to his former temper.* Hence come those dreadful fears of good souls, that the grace of God was never in truth in them, but that they are still in a carnal state, and shall perish at last, and all this for want of carrying on the work of mortification in them: As a lively Faith overcomes sin, so prevailing lust weakens Faith, 1 *Joh.* 5. 4. *Eph.* 4. 2. 30. withstands the sealing work of the Spirit, and overthrows the work of the Soul's hopes, filling it with fears about the unsoundness of his estate, and the miserable issue of all his profession, experience and labor. By this ladder of unmortified sin, the Devil scales the royal fort of Faith, throws down its Towers, and mans it against the Soul's peace, comfort and holiness. O the mischief that Christians do to themselves by indulging sin, and for want of a vigorous pursuit of this great duty of mortification! which makes them like to *Israel*, who being once upon the borders of *Canaan*, were by their unbelief, and unsubdued lusts, brought back near the confines of *Egypt* again, and after a

(b) *Si neglexerint perpetuam praxim mortificationis, vitia conculcata & subacta resumunt vires, corruptio absensa repullulat & suffocata gratia spiritus sancti redit homo ad ingenium suum.* Dav.

weary-

wearying unconstant life, were consum'd in the wilderness at last. So 'tis with gracious Souls, by their unmortified lusts, after some accesses to grace, tastes of divine love, hopes of glory, and fairness for Heaven, they are brought back to the borders of Hell again, and made to spend their life in an uncomfortable and soul-distressing wilderness. Christians, 'tis not security enough for your peace and spiritual welfare, that sin hath lost its dominion, unless its strength and life be impaired also: dethroned sin may bid you many a battel, and give you sore foils, and though it may not recover the Scepter, yet it may keep the Sword; and when it cannot mount the Throne, may get into some strong hold, and put the soul to much trouble e're it be beaten out again. Neither is it safe to acquiesce in some temporary truce with thy corruptions; bloody overthrows have been oftimes the events of a cessation of war for a season: Joab *blew the Trumpet, and all the people stood still, and pursued after* Israel *no more, neither fought they any more*, (i. e. for that time.) 2 *Sam.* 2. 28. And yet 'tis said, *ch.* 3. 1. *Now there was long war between the house of* Saul *and the house of* David; *but the house of* David *waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of* Saul *waxed weaker and weaker*: Sin may seem to yield, and trouble thy soul no more for a time, but carry it quietly with thee, as *Joab* did to *Abner*, and on a sudden smite thee to the ground, though not to death, 2 *Sam.* 3. 27. Nor is it enough that sin be in chains, and under restraint through the present strength of overcoming

coming grace, unless it be hang'd up in chains as a dead malefactor. Secured lust may break prison, and escape from under thy hand (as *Benhadab* did from *Ahab*) to thy greater hurt; 1 *Kings* 20. 42. What mischief have chained Beasts and Lions done when broke loose? Believer, thy condition is not safe till thy sin be dead: what *Saul* said to *Jonathan*, 1 *Sam.* 20. 31. may be applied to thy case; *As long as the Son of Jesse liveth upon the ground thou shalt not be established, nor thy Kingdom; wherefore now send and fetch him to me, for he shall surely dye.* So can thy Soul obtain no stability in grace, but be always full of ups and downs, and have wars and changes against thee till thy corruptions be subdued.

Quest. *But how shall I do to get sin mortified? I am convinced 'tis my duty, but find it not my capacity: After all my strivings, prayers and hopes, I am still foiled, and fear I shall one day perish by the hand of these Sauls. O when shall the Kingdom be restored to Israel? When shall the deliverer come to my soul? What shall I do to get these mountains a plain before* Zerubbabel? *and these Thieves crucified with my Lord Christ?*

Sol. If ever thou meanest to get the death of thy sins, take these directions.

Direct. 1. First, Do nothing that might tend to strengthen sin. *Rom.* 13. 14. *Make* προνοιαν *no provision for the flesh, to fulfill the desires.* *lusts thereof*: the word signifies a provident care

of

of the flesh, as men do to maintain themselves and families? Don't take up your thoughts about it, how to feed and please your lusts. Never think to kill your corruptions while you secretly feed and maintain them. Many complain of their corruptions, and yet all the while feed and strengthen them. There are several things that do contribute maintenance to men's lusts.

First, Delightful Remembrance of former sins, do wonderfully please a carnal heart, and stir up desires to future sins. As the remembrance of former mercies is food to precious faith, *Psal.* 74. 14. *Thou brakest the head of the Leviathan in pieces, and gavest him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness.* *Israel's* deliverance out of *Egypt*, and the breaking of *Pharaoh's* power, seriously thought on, was food to *Israel's* faith in the wilderness: And such are delightful remembrances of former sin: When a person takes pleasure to think and talk of his former evils; this doth feed present desires and hopes of sin. When *Paul* would help on the *Romans* freedom from the service of sin, he labours to get their present thoughts of former sins imbittered. *Rom.* 6. 21. *What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of these things is death.*

Secondly, Pleasing Imaginations, and fancying of present or future sins, do wonderfully strengthen the habit of sin. The Lord charges *Israel's* sinful actions, as the product of their wicked thoughts. *Isa.* 65. 2. *Which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts:*

Sin

Sin first begins in the head, and ends in the feet; first working thoughts of sin, and then actual works of sin: The Devil doth usually strike the first fire on on the tinder of mens thoughts, which afterwards burns in their hearts and lives, *Jam.* 1. 15. *When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death.* They that would avoid the birth of sin in their lives, must take heed of the conception of sin in their pleasing thoughts. They that would help on *Babylon's* ruine, must prevent its propagation, and put a timely check to their growth; dashing their little ones against the stone, *Psal.* 137. 9. Leave (*a*) not any thing that belongs to *Babylon* in thy soul, saith *Hugo.*

Thirdly, Unbelief strengthens lust, *Jer.* 2. 25. *But thou saidst there is no hope; no, for I have loved strangers, and after them I will go,* נואש *Desperatum est (scil.) cor.* My heart despairs of help, I fear it will never be better, therefore I will go on in my way. Unbelief strengthens lust, and makes the soul a prey to it. 'Twas by unbelief *Israel* fell in the wilderness, both into sin and ruine. And the Apostle Cautions Christians that they fall not by the same example of unbelief, *Heb.* 4. 11. 'Twas unbelieving desponding fears had almost turned up *David's* heels, had not grace succoured him by the Word, *Psal.* 73. 2. *But as for me, my feet were almost gone, my steps had well-nigh slipt.* And whence came this weakness of grace, and strength of corruption? Why, it was from the

(*a*) *Sit nihil mihi Babylonicum.*

appre-

apprehended prosperity of sin and sinners; and the successes issues of his profession and obedience: *Verse* 15. *Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency*: If this be the fruit of my holiness, then all my labour is in vain; 'tis to no purpose I have followed God all this while, if wickedness shall carry it at last. O take heed of unbelief if ever you would get down your lusts.

Fourthly, Presumption secretly conveys in relief to sin, and succours it against all the sieges of Word and Spirit, 2 *Pet.* 2. 10. *Presumptuous are they, self-will'd.* A presumptuous soul is a self-pleasing soul, one that pertinaciously and wilfully seeks his own carnal contentments, τὴν σαρκὸς πρόνοιαν, (as the word imports,) he will boldly adventure on the most dangerous issues of sin, so he may but gratifie his lusts, and obtain his sinful desires; he fears no dangers, sticks at no hardships, though God and his Word be against him; it makes the sinner go against all warnings, threatnings, counsels, with hopes of success. *Numb.* 14. 44. *But they presumed to go up to the hill top, verse* 42. The Lord forbad them to go, threatning his remove from them, and their ruine, if they durst go up against his will. Nay, it was said, *The Ark of the Covenant of the Lord; and Moses went not out of the Camp*; would not stir one foot with them in that wicked enterprize, yet they would go. O take heed of Presumption, that does exceedingly keep up sin, and pull down the sinner.

Fifthly, Carnal security is a great friend to sin, and contributes much to its advantage, when Chri-

Christians let down their Watch, and lye down to slumber, then Corruptions rise up and prevails over them. When the *Amalekites* were spread abroad upon all the Earth, eating, and drinking, and dancing, because of all the great spoil that they had taken out of the Land of the *Philistines*, 1 *Sam.* 30. 16, 17. *David* fell upon them, and smote them from the twilight, even to the evening of the next day, and there escaped not a man of them save four hundred young men which rode upon Camels and fled. So 'tis with gracious Souls after some great mercy, either some special priviledge enjoy'd, some spoils upon their Lusts obtained, or token of God's Favour received, they become secure, proud and careless, letting down their Watch, exposing themselves to temptations, and soon become a Prey to Sin and Satan. *Jer.* 48. 11. Moab *hath been at ease from his youth, and he hath settled on his Lees, and hath not been emptied from Vessel to Vessel, neither hath he gone into Captivity, therefore his taste remaineth in him, and his scent is not changed.* If you would have a change on your carnal hearts, take heed of carnal security in your hearts.

Sixthly, Self-indulgence helps to nourish Sin, when persons are lovers of their own selves; seek to please, indulge and gratifie the desires of carnal natural-self, then Lusts thrive in that Soul. He that feasts his Body (saith *Ephrem Syrus*) and starves his soul, is like him that feasts his Slave, and starves his Wife. 2 *Tim.* 3. 2. Self-love leads the Van to all the Iniquities and Hypocrisies of the last times. O the Troops of Sin that march

under the banner of self-love, and are secured by its conduct; hence self-denial is the first step to Christianity, *Mat.* 16. 24. You can never prosper in your salvation-attempts, or decay in your soul-ruining lusts, till you learn to deny your selves in every part of it. Take heed of a selfish spirit, if you would be sincere souls, and see the death of your lusts.

Seventhly, Opportunity favours sin exceedingly, and helps to keep its hopes alive, and gives it occasion for its enlargement. Opportunity is the Midwife of lust, and helps to deliver it of its inward conceptions and pregnant desires: 'Twas opportunity that blew the coal of *David*'s lust into a flame, 2 *Sam.* 11. 2. and midwiv'd out *Hezekiah*'s pride, *Isa* 39. 2. Had it not been for opportunity, *Lot* might have escaped the sin of Incest, as well as the sufferings of *Sodom*, *Gen.* 19. 30. to 37. and *Judah* uncleanness with his Daughter-in-law *Tamar*: 'Twas opportunity that exposed *Dinah* to a rape, and *Peter* to the temptation of denying his Lord and Master. Take heed of adventuring into the way of temptation, and going to the borders of soul-danger; shun the occasions of evil; turn aside out of the way of snares, *Prov.* 1. 15 *chap.* 4, 14, 15. Temptation feeds corruption, ensnares and entangles the feet, and (as fewel) keeps in the fire of lust. You may as safely suffer the sparks to come near to gun-powder, as opportunity to corruption.

Eighthly, Impenitency in sin strengthens the habit of sin. *Jer.* 8. 6. *No man repented him of his wickedness, saying, what have I done?* every

one turned to his course, as the horse rusheth into the Battel. They run on furiously in sin, as the Horse doth into the Battel, who runs till he sweats (saith *Theodoret.*) So they have no end or satiety of sin; and (*b*) this impenitency in sin was the cause of all their pertinacy in sin. Impenitency hardens the heart, and heaps up sin on sin unto the day of wrath, *Rom.* 2. 5. Take heed then of all those things that may in the least maintain and keep up sin in your Souls, as ever you think to bring it down: That's the first Advice.

Direct. 2. Secondly, Not only shun whatever might strengthen sin, but take heed you go not out in your own strength against sin, if ever you think to mortifie it: He that would mortifie sin, must be able to master Devils, *Ephes.* 6. *v.* 12. But humane strength is no match for Devils: If man in his pure estate were too weak for such an Adversary, then much more impotent is impure and imperfect man: 'Tis not the Woman, but the *Womans seed must bruise the Serpents head, Gen.* 3. 15. The Saints victory is *through him that hath loved them, and given himself a Sacrifice to God for them, Rom.* 16. 20. *Rom.* 8. 37. *Ephes.* 5. 2. It must be his Armour and Arm too must bring salvation from spiritual Enemies: *Without me you can do nothing, John.* 15. 5. 'Tis this makes Souls to fail in their attempts against sin, that they set about it in a strength inferiour to sin. When *Augustine* after all his strivings, vows and duties to bring down his corruptions, found them still too hard for him?

(*b*) *Talis cogitatio causa fuit pertinaciæ impiæ. Idem.*

he heard a Voice saying to him, (c) *Thou standest in thy self, and therefore thou dost not stand*: Whereupon he betook himself to Prayer, and Faith in the Blood of Christ, and so got some Victory over them. When the Exorcists, *Act.* 19. *v.* 15, 16. went to cast out Devils by the bare Name of Christ, without the Power of Christ; both they and their attempts soon miscarried: *Jesus I know, and* Paul *I know, but who are ye? and the man, in whom the evil Spirit was, leapt on them, and overcame them, and prevailed over them, so that they fled out of the house naked, and wounded.* Creature-strength is too weak to master that Enemy which hath the power of Hell to guard it. O go not out against Sin

In the strength of your purposes and promises *Peter* to his own cost, found that too weak to secure him in an hour of temptation.

Go not out in the strength of your frames and affections: How easily can Satan beat the Saints from these Posts, and cast in a Flood to drown their warmest affections! The *Galatians* that were high in frames and affections, and could talk of a blessedness, while spiritual, soon felt an alteration when they became carnal, *Gal.* 4. 15. *chap* 3. 3.

Go not out in the strength of your duties and Performances; these are too weak without Faith and the Arm of Christ to charm these Serpents, and disarm spiritual Adversaries.

Go not out in the strength of your Graces; these are not Christ, nor have an Almightiness in them to bring down Sin and Satan; 'Tis not

(c) *In te stas & non stas.*

grace

grace in Believers, but grace in Christ, that is sufficient to guard the Soul from Satan's buffetings, and to rescue it from his Temptations, *2 Cor.* 12. 9.

Direct. 3. Thirdly, Get the Union between thy heart and sin broken: The life of sin lies in that Union it hath with the heart; if that be broken, sin dies; as a man then ceaseth to live, when the Union between the Soul and Body is dissolved: Sin hath too great a part even in a Believer's Heart, which moves for some respect and indulgence towards it: When the enlightned mind says, Crucifie it, the carnal affections cry, *Spare it, is it not a little one?* And the heart (like the City of *Iconium* about *Paul* and *Barnabas* is divided. *Act.* 14. 4. *And the Multitude of the City was divided, and part held with the Jews, and part with the Apostles.* So 'tis with the gracious Soul; Sin hath too great a potency in the carnal mind, which must be broken, or Sin will never die: Get the Spirit's interest in thy heart strengthened, and sins party weakened every day.

There are seven things that have a great tendency to weaken the Hearts Union with sin, and withdraw its affections from it.

First, An abiding sense of the great Love of Christ towards it; that he should pity him, when pitied of none, left of all; love him, when wallowing in his Blood, and altogether unlovely in himself; love him, while an Enemy to God, yea to his own soul; love him so as to give himself for him; to leave his Father's Glory, and take up shame, yea taste of death for

him, love him, and pass by others; call him, and leave others: the serious consideration of this hath a great constraint on the gracious heart to hate sin, which Christ so hates, and in love to the soul came to destroy.

Secondly; A due apprehension of the unconceivable sufferings of the Lord Jesus, and all procur'd by sin: *He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; he bore our griefs and carried our sorrows: he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquites; he was oppressed and afflicted, and* (that which gave an extremity to all these sorrows) *it pleased the Lord to bruise him, to put him to grief, and to make his soul an offering for sin:* This made the blows the heavier, that they came from a Father's hand: *Had any Enemy done it, it might have been easier born* (though his torments were unimaginable) *but mine equal, mine acquaintance, my familiar friend, Psal.* 55. 12, 13. *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Mat.* 27. 46. and all this the fruit of sin: This makes a gracious soul to hate sin, that hath been so cruel to his best and only friend.

Thirdly; A believing sight of the excellency and holiness of Christ, hath a mighty power to draw off the heart from sin: when the Prophet had got a view of the Lord in his holiness, he hath presently unlovely and troublesome thoughts of sin. *Isa.* 6. *v.* 1. to 7. *Wo is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King the Lord*

Lord of Hosts: A sight of Christ's holiness will make sin seem exceeding vile and loathsome, and the soul restless till delivered from it: 'Tis unacquaintedness with the holiness and beautiful perfections of Christ, that makes men fall in love with that deformed monster, sin: the transcendent glory of Christ is his grace; and the glory of the Saints is to be like him, *Joh.* 1. 14. which is obtained through the immediate views of him. 1 *Joh.* 3. 2. *When he appears, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is*; The hope of which sight, and glory, is soul-purifying now: *ver.* 3. *And every man that hath this hope purifieth himself, as he is pure:* No sooner had the Apostles a sight of Christ's glorious grace, but the next thing was *a receiving from his fulness grace for grace*, Joh. 1. 14. 16.

Fourthly; A sensible sight of the exceeding sinfulness and evil of sin will help to loosen this conjunction between the heart and sin: when once *Paul* came to see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and felt the killing fruits of it in his soul, his heart presently came to be loosened from the ruling power of it. *Rom.* 7. 11. 13. *That which I do, I allow not; what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.* The sense of the shameful fruits of sin was influential on the believing *Romans* towards their freedom from sin, *Rom.* 6. 21, 22. Christians get your eye more intently fix'd on the cursed nature of sin; how contrary to God; how like to Devils; how filthy loathsome and abominable: look upon the certain dreadful effects of sin here, and to all eternity, if not removed; it hath

brought death on the Son of God, and destruction on the Sons of Men, Bondage on the Creatures, a Curse on every thing men do and enjoy; Enmity against God, Alienation from God, robbing him of his Glory, crossing his Will, spoiling his Works, grieving his Spirit, hindering the Soul in Duty, depriving it of Mercy, exposing it to Judgment, necessitating it to Evil, weakening his Hopes, breaking his Peace, opposing his Grace, and endangering either the loss or lessening of his Glory; with other innumerable mischiefs, injuries, cruelty and miseries that follow the Heels of it; with the great difficulty in its removal. *I say*; be more in the heart-affecting consideration of these things, and you cannot choose, but with *Paul*, be weary of sin, loath it, and long for a separation from it, *Rom.* 7. 24. How can ye love that Knife that hath stabb'd your dearest Friend, Father, Husband; yea your own Soul? How can you like that Cloud and Veil which stands between you and the Son of Righteousness, and keeps these quickning warming Beams from you, which would have cleared and strengthned your heart? How can you hug the Fetters, kiss the Walls and Doors that imprison your Souls in Bondage, and keep you from your beloved, and from the glorious liberty of the Sons of God? what pleasure can you take in that Thief which stole your richest Jewels, and hath brought you to a Morsel of Bread?

5ly, Apprehension of that high dignity and honorable state to which grace hath advanc'd you, & those peculiar glorious priviledges which you are

are now invested with, hath a mighty influence on a gracious heart towards the abhorring of sin, 1 *Joh.* 3. 1, 2, 3. Oh how unsutable are works of darkness to the children of light! how unbecoming is vile rayment to them that dwell in Kings Houses: A Swine's snout to a Saint's Eye; thick clay, and defiling dirt on the Hands, Face, and Heart of the Heirs of Glory, and Children of the Kingdom: what an unlovely sight is it to see Kings wallow in the mire as Swine; and such who enjoy the priviledges of Angels, to do the work of Devils? Remember, that thou art Son to a King, said one to *Antigonus*, and that will keep thee from base courses. O Christians! work in these thoughts upon the heart, and see whether there can be any room left for the works of the flesh, or affections thereof.

Sixthly; Expectations of future Glory will help you to despise that abominable thing, sin: Can you rationally look for a Throne with your Beloved hereafter, and lodge in the Bosome of your Idols and adulterous Lovers now? How can you think that head shall wear a Crown of Glory with Christ, who is always plotting to put Crowns of Thorns on Christ's head now? To reap life everlasting then, who sow to the flesh now? Do you hope for that time when you shall be uncloath'd of sin? and can you make it your present work to put on sin, hold fast sin? how inconsistent are desires of sin, with hopes of freedom? Christians, don't deceive your Souls, you cannot have sure grounds of fellowship with God hereafter, and allow the least Communion between your hearts and sin now.

Seventh-

Seventhly, Maintained Union and Communion with Chriſt will break Heart-union and Fellowſhip with ſin: As Heart-union with ſin will not admit of Union and Communion with God. *Hoſ.* 4. 17. Ephraim *is joined to Idols, let him alone:* I will have no more to do with him; I'll leave, and remove from him: So Union and Communion with God in Chriſt, will not bear Union with ſin. *Hoſ.* 2. 2. The Lord would not ſay *Iſrael* was his Wife, until her Whoredoms were put out of her ſight, and her Adulteries from between her breaſts: and no ſooner did ſhe return to a believing ſight of, and affectionate Union with him, but ſhe preſently cries out, *What have I to do with Idols any more? Hoſ.* 14. 8. Contraries oppoſe and weaken each other. *Pſal.* 97. 10. *Ye that love the Lord, hate evil.* Matth. 6. 24. *No man can ſerve two Maſters, either he will hate the one, and love the other; or elſe he will hold to the one, and deſpiſe the other: ye cannot ſerve God and Mammon.* Union with God is of an incorporating nature. 1 *Cor.* 6. 17. *He that is joyned to the Lord is one ſpirit,* and cannot ſubſiſt without heart-ſeparation from ſin. 2 *Cor.* 6. 16, 17. *I will dwell in them, and walk in them;*——*wherefore come out from among them, and be ye ſeparate ſaith the Lord.* Cleaving to Chriſt by Faith is the beſt way to the relinquiſhment of ſin. The ſoul that hath conſtant Fellowſhip with Chriſt will not care for other Lovers, *Phil.* 3. 8. That's the third Direction: Get the Union between thy heart and ſin broken.

Direct. 4. Fourthly, if you would mortifie ſin,

ſin, ſtrike at the root of it, and get the body of this death deſtroyed. The life of the Tree lies in the root; lop off all the Branches, yet if the root be ſound, the Tree lives, and the Branches will ſprout out again, *Job* 14. 7, 8, 9. But if once the root be cut off, the whole Tree dies and ceaſes from bringing forth Fruit. So 'tis with ſin, if you ſet againſt this or that particular corruption, and let the Body of Death alone, not uſing means to weaken that, you will make but little of all your endeavours; when you have quieted one Luſt, another ariſes: 'Tis but to little purpoſe to lade away Waters out of a Ship, unleſs you ſtop the leak that feeds them; while there is Water in the Sea, it will be ſtill running in. They that will cure a diſeaſe, muſt get the cauſe removed: Original ſin is the ſource and fountain of all actual ſins; as that is weakened, ſo will the irruption of actual ſins be abated: The way to prevent the Inroads and ſtraglings of a Garriſon, is to begirt the Fort, and not only keep them in, but ſcale and attach the ſtrong hold that ſecures them. *This is the wiſdom of a Chriſtian* (ſaith Mr. *Burroughs*) *that when he comes to labour againſt any corruption, he doth not ſpend his time ſo much againſt this or that particular corruption, but ſtrikes at the Body of corruption:* ——— *And hence is the reaſon that Chriſtians in ſo little time grow ſo much, and get ſo much power againſt their corruptions, whereas others are a long time before they get any power at all.* 'Tis with a Believers heart, as with a Garden overgrown with Weeds; though the tops be often plucked off, while the mores and ſtrings abide

abide under-ground, all they do to cleanse it is labour in vain, they still spring up afresh: So is it with mens Corruptions, till the root be more withered and weakened. Now to further this work:

First, Be deeply sensible of your sinful natures, as well as sinful actions: This the faithful complain mostly of, even their sinful natures. *Isa.* 64. 6. *We are all as an unclean thing, and our Righteousnesses as filthy Rags.* *Psal.* 51. 5. *Behold I was shapen in Iniquity, and in Sin did my Mother conceive me.* *Rom.* 7. 24. *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death.*

Secondly, Apply the Death of Christ by faith to the whole Body of sin in you. Faith fetches Virtue from a crucified Christ to dry up the Bloody Issue of sin, *Luke* 8. 44. *chap.* 6. 19. This being the appointed way of God to bring down sin. The foundation of a Soul's redemption from sin is laid in the Death of Christ. 1 *Pet.* 2. 24. *Who bare our sins for us in his own Body on the Tree, that we being dead to sin, might live to Righteousness.* This death to sin is the effect of Christ's dying for sin; this being the end of his death, to redeem his people from all iniquity, *Titus* 2. *v.* 14. Christ's death for sin was not only a pattern to Believers, but a medicine and appointed means to destroy their sin. *Rom.* 6. 6. *Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him; that the Body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.* 'Twas by the Cross of Christ that *Paul* was crucified to the World, and the World to him, *Gal.* 6. 14. Carry over thy old man

man to the Cross of Christ, and bury thy strong Lusts by Faith in the Grave of Christ, deriving Vertue thence to kill thy sin. Faith brings the Soul into a fellowship with the Death of Christ, to receive the benefits and energy thereof; one of which benefits is a killing power on sin.

Thirdly, Improve Faith in the Promises. The death of sin in Believers, is part of the New Covenant, and as sure as pardon. *Micah.* 7. 19. *He will turn again, he will have compassion, he will subdue our Iniquities, and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depth of the Sea*, *Mat.* 1. 21. He shall save his people from their sins, *Rom.* 6. *v.* 14. *Deut.* 30. 6. which promises are sure to all the seed: The Lord Jesus came on purpose to perform the promises to, and in his people: *Rom.* 15. 8. *To redeem them from all iniquity*, *Titus* 2. 14. And to destroy the works of the Devil, 1 *Joh.* 3. 8. And Faith in these Promises is Soul-cleansing, and Sin-subduing: Carry over thy unruly corruptions to Christ in the Promises, and sue for Justice upon them.

Fourthly, Implore the constant help of the Spirit of Grace, both to discover, oppose and destroy thy corruptions: This work is too hard for Flesh and Blood; nothing short of the Eternal Spirit can get a full conquest over sin, and the power and wiles of Satan in thy Soul: 'Tis *through the Spirit Believers come to mortifie the deeds of the Body*, *Rom.* 8. 13. *And by the Spirit of Judgment and burning, the Lord purges away the Blood of* Jerusalem, *Isa.* 4. 4. *And by the Law of the Spirit of Life, we are made free from the Law of Sin and Death*, *Rom.* 8. 2. Take heed of

grieving

grieving and impeding the Spirit of Holineſs, by which his gracious, ſanctifying influences are ſuſpended, and thou be left to the weakneſſes of thy own Spirit. Be much in Prayer and fervent cries for the Spirit's daily aſſiſtance in this great work.

Fifthly, Give no place to the leaſt motions of ſin, but maintain a conſtant War againſt the whole powers and body of ſin: The want of preventing care, timely oppoſition, and conſtant Warfare againſt all the corruptions of fleſh and ſpirit, is one thing that lays gracious ſouls under the entanglements and prevalency of their luſts. *James* 4. 17. 1 *Theſ.* 5. 2. *Rom.* 12. 9. *We embrace* (faith one) *the deſires of our temptations upon implicit faith, not examining and withſtanding the firſt entrance of temptation, nor cruſhing the firſt motions of ſin.* 'Tis eaſie to cruſh the Serpent's Egge, but dangerous conflicting with it when it becomes a Cockatrice. A Rebellion may be with leſs ſtrength diſſipated at its firſt appearance, than ſuppreſſed when it hath gathered head, *Iſa.* 14. 29. The Devil's firſt aſſault (ſaith *Chryſoſtome*) is violent; reſiſt that, and his ſecond will be weaker, and that being reſiſted alſo, he proves a Coward. A Chriſtian's Wiſdom and Intereſt lies much in theſe two things:

Firſt, To take the ſtart of ſin, to ſtrike the firſt blow, to be in the Field before it; yea to baracado up its way, and to fall in upon its quarters; to lay in Proviſion againſt its very riſing; to fortifie the heart againſt the leaſt conſent to ſin, by applying Threatnings and Promiſes betimes, and furniſhing the heart with Sove-

raign

raign and Scriptural Antidotes against it: The neglect of this preventing care, deprives the Soul of needful helps against its surprisal, and so renders it weak against its first assaults. *Arius* at first (saith *Hierom*) was but a spark, but being not suppresst betimes, he proved the incendiary of the whole Church.

Secondly, To prosecute the Soul's Victory over sin: Sometimes the Lord gives his people power over a Lust, by a sanctified affliction, or blessed ordinance, which Victory, if pursued, might tend to the total subduing of it; but usually we grow secure after such successes, and do not follow the Victory, but give over too soon, as *Joash* in his smiting on the Ground, 2 *Kings* 13. 18, 19. The Prophet bid him shoot the Arrows of the Lord's deliverance, and smite upon the Ground; and 'tis said, *He smote thrice and stayed; and the man of God was wroth with him, and said, Thou should'st have smitten five or six times, then hadst thou smitten* Syria *till thou hadst consumed it.* O what advantage might a Christian get if he did but follow his Victory over his corruptions, and not suffer them to recruit and gather strength again! Give no rest to thy Lusts nor space for reviving; no not for a moment, but keep up the Warfare every day.

Sixthly, If you would further the death of Sin, keep up the life of Grace: As the life of Sin weakens Grace; so the life of Grace keeps down and weakens sin. *Gal.* 5. 16. *Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.* Keep up Grace and Sin will down. *As when the*

house

houſe of David *waxed ſtronger, the houſe of* Saul *waxed weaker*, 2 *Sam.* 3. 1. 'Tis written of *Ephrem Syrus*, that though he was a man much given to paſſion in his youth; yet after he entered into a ſtrict courſe of life, he was never ſeen to be angry with any man. As you cannot get power over ſin, but by the Spirit of Grace; ſo you cannot keep the head over ſin, but by the Life of Grace: Get your Graces ſtrengthened, and you will find your Corruptions weakened.

Thirdly, You muſt carry on Renovation in Grace, and the inward work of Sanctification every day: *Epheſ.* 3. 23, 24. *And be renewed in the ſpirit of your minds: And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in Righteouſneſs and true holineſs* (*a*). After the work of Mortification, the Apoſtle preſſes Chriſtians to this work of Renovation, or Internal Holineſs; be renewed in the Spirit of your minds (*i. e.*) in your minds by the Holy Spirit; the mind being put for the whole man, and internal faculties of the Soul; both Underſtanding, Will, Affections and conſcience; all muſt be renewed by the Spirit, called the New Creature, 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. or Workmanſhip of Chriſt transformed after his own Image in Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs; and renewed in knowledge, *Eph.* 4. 24. *Col.* 3. 10. When the Soul is truly regenerated, there is the ſtamp or exemplar of Chriſt's Holineſs, placed in the whole Soul in Truth; but in weak meaſures at firſt, which muſt be renewed

(*a*) ἀνανεοῦσθαι δὲ διὰ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος καὶ τοῦ νοὸς καὶ ἑστῶτος ἡμῶν. Schol.

or

or enlarged in the Soul, till it comes to the fulneſs of the meaſure of the ſtature of Chriſt: Chriſtians at the firſt change, are compar'd to new born Babes, 2 *Pet.* 2. 2. weak in Grace, but under a natural diſpoſition and obligations to growth and encreaſes in this Grace of God, both intenſively and extenſively: This is a Chriſtian's duty by Divine Command, and comports with the appointment of God in order to it, 2 *Pet.* 3. *v.* 18. 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. *Epheſ.* 4. 11, 12, 13. 'Tis the way by which Grace becomes Glory, and is greatly neceſſary to perfect a Soul's holineſs; that ſo he might come to his full ſtature and conformity to Chriſt, *Epheſ.* 4. 16. *Rom.* 8. 29. And by the increaſes of Grace may be enabled to diſpatch all his Duties, bear his Burdens, and bear up under his Temptations, that he might be capable to enjoy all his Mercies, to glorifie the God of Grace, and to be made meet for the enjoyment of God in glory: On all which accounts it becomes the Chriſtian's great concern to preſs after larger meaſures of Grace every day; to grow up into him in Faith and Love, who is the head in all things, *Epheſ.* 4. 15. To grow downward in Humility and Self-denial; to grow extenſively in every part of Holineſs, and greater enlargements in every Grace; to wax ſtronger and ſtronger in the Grace that is in Chriſt Jeſus: *Perfecting holineſs in the fight of God; and preſſing more and more after the price of the High Calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus*: The want of which encreaſes of the Spirit, doth much obſcure the glory of Chriſt in Believers, cloud their evidences, and render them too weak for their Corrup-

tions, their growing tryals and duties. Christians, content not your selves with the truth of grace, without daily growth in grace. Improve your interest in the Resurrection of Christ, by believing for the daily quickening of your hearts, and raising of your affections to things above, and attracting your desires and whole Souls after God, Grace and Glory. Be much in internal Soul-work, of Heart-searching, Soul-watching, Divine Contemplation, secret Ejaculations, and Soul-breathings after God, and higher manifestations of his light, life and love.

Be constant in every appointment of God, publick and private, of prayer, reading, hearing, holy conference, that you may get nourishment thereby administred to your Souls: Get under all the dews and showres of Grace for your fruitfulness.

Be spiritual as well as frequent in exercising Grace under the means of Grace; without this you cannot serve God acceptably, *Heb.* 12. 28. or receive from him who is the head nourishment to your Souls, but by these Bands and Joynts of Faith and Love, *Col.* 2. 19. Formality eats out that sap which should make you green and flourishing: A dead, cold heart under the Word, can no more digest it to nutriment, than a dead Body can concoct natural food.

Maintain hungring desires after the Word of Grace, and appointed means to your spiritual growth, 1 *Pet.* 2. 3. Hungring after food argues a good digestion, and a sound concoction furthers nourishment: Keep up warm affection to every way of God, living on Christ for all the good and

and blessing of them. *Psal.* 84. 5. *Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee, in whose heart are the ways of them; who passing through the Valley of* Baca, *make it a Well; the Rain also filleth the Pools; they go from strength to strength, every one in* Sion *appearing before God.* When *Jehoshaphat*'s heart was lifted up in the ways of the Lord, 'tis said he waxed great exceedingly, 2 *Chron.* 17. 6, 12. Heart-enlargement in the ways of God is a notable help to soul-thrivings: Take this one thing more; be poor in spirit, if you would be rich in grace: Such are under the promise of being satisfied, of being guided in Judgment, of increasing their Joy; to such he will give grace, and revivings. *Humble souls* (a) (saith one) *are empty Vessels, which God will fill; are low Plants, which God will make to grow: To be nothing in our own eyes, is the way to receive all good things, even grace in abundance from God,* *Psal.* 22. 26. and 25. 9. *Isa.* 29. 19. *Prov.* 3. 34. *Isa.* 57. 15.

Fourthly; To keep your evidences for Heaven fair and legible, is another part of your Salvation-work: this will abundantly comfort you under all your tribulations, quicken you to a lively dispatch of your duties, give you a humble boldness in your approaches to God; arm you against the fears of death; and administer to you an abundant entrance into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Beware of quenching and grieving the Spirit of grace, by which its sealing-work is hindered: Take heed of laying blots upon your

(a) *Reyner*; Excellency of Grace.

evidences, by any allowed iniquity in your Hearts, or unpurged defilement in your Hands, which will weaken your confidence in the Lord, fill you with dejection and despondency of Spirit, and give your Spiritual Adversary great advantage over your Souls, 2 *Pet.* 1. 10. 1 *Joh.* 3. 13. 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. 1 *Cor.* 15. 58. *Heb.* 10. 22. *Job* 19. 25, 26, 27. 2 *Pet.* 1. 11.

Keep up your sincerity and truth in the inner man, be often looking to the principle of your Actions, that it be gracious; and to your ends in every thing you do, that they be pure, singly, and ultimately aiming at God, his will and glory in every duty, action and undertaking.

If you would evidence the truth of Grace, you must be every day in the exercise of Grace, and conscionable endeavours to live up to known Duties, exercising a Conscience void of Offence towards God and Man, not resting in any measures of Grace, but going on towards perfection, and aiming at greater enlargements in your Souls and Graces continually.

Thirdly; Carry on all these Natural, Moral, and Religious Duties that concern others. This is the will of God, and part of your Sanctification. *Matth.* 5. 16. *Let your light shine before men, and by your good works glorifie your Father which is in Heaven.* 1 *Cor.* 10. 32. *Walk unblamable towards all men, giving no offence to any, lest the Gospel be blamed.* Phil. 1. 10. *That you may be sincere and without offence to the day of Christ.* 1 Pet. 2. 12. *Having your Conversation honest among those you have to do with*; dealing justly with all men, rendring to every man his due; doing

doing good to all, as opportunity serveth, *Gal.* 6. 10. *Psal.* 35. 13. and be kind to the just and unjust, seeking the salvation of sinners, mourning over them, praying for them, instructing of them; seeking by a humble, holy, and affectionate carriage to win them over to the Lord Jesus, who are not won by the Word, *Luke* 19. 41. *Psal.* 51. 13. 2 *Pet.* 3. 1. Loving, praying for, doing good unto your greatest Enemies. Vertues separated (saith *Chrysostom*) are annihilated; Equity without Goodness, is severity; and Justice without Piety, cruelty: 'Tis better to do good than to receive good. 'Twas said of Mr. *Hooker*, *That he was born for the good of many, but few born for the good of him*: That you love, delight in, and do good to all Saints, as Saints, that carry the Image of God on them. That you make Conscience of your Relative Duties both in your own houses, and in the house of God. *Psal.* 101. 2. Walking within your own houses with a perfect heart; to be Christians at home as well as abroad; shewing the same spirit, zeal and affections to your Families as to others; doing your utmost to keep up the service of God in your houses, both together and asunder, morning and evening in prayer, and reading the word of God, *Acts* 10. 2. 9. *Josh.* 24. 18. *Psal.* 25. 10. *Matth.* 6. 6. That you faithfully discharge those mutual duties you owe to each other, as Husband, Wife, Parents, Children, Masters, Servants, *Eph.* 5. 22. to the end of *chap.* 6. To be meek, loving, peaceable in your words and carriages towards one another, giving that due respect as the place

and relation calls for from each other: To be holy and profitable in your discourses, seeking the spiritual welfare, edification and salvation of each others souls, as of your own, *Deut.* 11. 19. *Prov.* 22. 6. *ch.* 23. 13. *Col.* 3. 12, to 16. *Heb.* 12. 14. *Gen.* 18. 19. The want of which due and Christian carriages in your houses brings up an evil report on the ways of God, rendreth the truth of your grace questionable, hinders the gracious presence of God with you, and removes his blessing from you, *Eph.* 4. 29. *Rom.* 11. 14. You whom grace hath priviledged with a place and name within the walls of God's house, do stand obliged to fellowship-duties of love, care and faithfulness to each other; *considering one another to provoke to love and good works*, Joh. 15. 12. Heb. 10. 24. *and esteem each other better than your selves: To seek one another good as your own, serving each other in love*, Phil. 2. 3. 1 *Cor.* 10. 24. 33. *Gal.* 5. 13. To sympathize with each other in affliction, *Col.* 3. 12. and to be helpful to them in bearing their burdens, supplying their wants, comforting, counselling, and supporting them in all their tribulations, *Heb.* 13. 3. visiting the sick and imprisoned, feeding the hungry, cloathing the naked, warning the unruly, admonishing the offenders, bearing one anothers infirmities, covering their weaknesses, avoiding whatever might offend and injure each others souls, or lessen their affections, or break the unity of spirit and bond of peace between them; but by a sweet, humble, self-denying, and faithful carriage, to engage the heart to each other, praying for the whole body,

body, and every member: To be gracious and spiritual in all your communion and converses, seeking the prosperity of *Sion*, rejoycing in each others graces and good, as in your own; doing all you may towards their comfort and salvation, *Mat.* 25. 42. *Acts* 20. 35. 1 *Joh.* 3. 17. *Rom.* 15. 1. and 16. 17. *Lev.* 19. 10. 2 *Cor.* 12. 20. *Col.* 4. 6. *Phil.* 2. 17, 18. *Tit.* 2. 12. 2 *Cor.* 13. 7. *Psal.* 15. 2. *Col.* 3. 9.

In your Callings, commerce and dealings with men, to be just, honest, and faithful, doing as you would be done unto, not defrauding one another, but speaking the truth in all your bargainings, and performing your promises, though to your hurt. This is a considerable part of your heavenly Trade, and that wherein the credit of Religion doth eminently lye; the pleasing and glorifying of God, the good of others, the propagation of the Gospel, the peace and salvation of your own souls, even in the faithful discharge of these natural, moral, and religious duties you owe unto others.

This is the first part of heavenly work; work of a heavenly nature as well as manner, both with respect to God, our own souls, and others.

Secondly, Another part of heavenly work is to do earthly things in an heavenly manner: Though the things of the World are of a different nature from things above, yet when rightly managed, they are subservient to them, and come within the compass of this Heavenly Trade: To which three things are needful.

1. *To do earthly things by heavenly rules.*
2. *With heavenly hearts.*
3. *To heavenly ends.*

First, Then is Earthly Work part of your Heavenly Trade, when you transact it by Heavenly Rules; every Science hath its Maxims; distinct Governments have their distinct Laws: So hath every Trade its Rules, Principles and Instructions by which it is carried on. Earthly Traders have their Rules and Methods by which they manage their businesses, as may most comport with the end they propose, and the advance of their own Earthly Interests; and so 'tis with Heavenly Traders, though they have to do with Earthly Things, yet they must act about them by Heavenly Rules.

Now there are ten Rules which Heavenly Merchants must observe in the management of their Earthly Affairs.

Rule 1. First, Be sure the matter of your employments be good, that your Callings be lawful, and the things you do be just and honest in the sight of God: Evil things can never be well done: meddle not with prohibited Goods; do nothing that either in its nature, use, or by Divine Law becomes evil, 2 *Cor.* 13. 7. *Phil.* 4. 8. *Eph.* 4. 28. Let your Callings be (*a*) lawful, of good report, and useful in your Generation, not only for your own interest and

(*a*) *Versetur circa id quod lictum est in se utile generi humano & famæ bonæ.* Ames.

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advantage, but for the ſervice and good of others: *For no man liveth to himſelf, Rom.* 14. 7. Such a Calling as hath God for its Author (*m*), being according to Scripture; and *hath God for its Teacher* (*n*) (ſaith *Fenner*) *Iſa.* 28. 26. And *as a man can manage with peace of conſcience, and be aſſur'd his work doth pleaſe God, and he can pray for a bleſſing upon it*; which they cannot do who ſet on employments that tend to nouriſh Vice and Wickedneſs, *Rom.* 13. 14.

That your Recreations alſo be lawful; ſuch as are free from ſcandal and temptation, uſed by, and with perſons fearing God, and ſuch as have a tendency to refreſh the mind and body, the better diſpoſing it to its neceſſary duties, being ſparingly and wiſely uſed, ſo as to be no occaſion of evil to others, and Religiouſly entred on by ſeeking to God for a right management of it, and bleſſing on it. Such Actions as come not under theſe Characters, are not becoming Chriſtians, who muſt give an account to God for every vain word, much more for idle actions, *Mat.* 12. 36. 'Tis part of that which will trouble Souls when their ſins are bearing on them; *that they have inherited Lies, Vanities, and things wherein is no profit, Jer.* 16. 19. Saints ſhould be working nothing but what hath a good in it: *Working with his hands the things that are good, Epheſ.* 4. 28. and which can bring ſome glory to God: *Whatſoever you do* (of which Re-

(*m*) *Opera Deo placere non poſſunt ſi vita ſuæ inſtitutum non eſt a Deo.* Frid. Baldm. (*n*) The works of that calling cannot pleaſe God, where the Calling it ſelf is not of God.

creations

creations is a part) *do all to the glory of God*, 1 *Cor.* 10. 31. But what good to the Body, Soul or Estate; what Glory to God; what Peace to Conscience in the day of Christ, can be found in carnal Sports, scandalous Plaies, Cards, Dice, lascivious Dancings, and the like; which are the Offspring of Chambering and Wantonness, things wherein is little Praise, Virtue, or good report; but rather the spots of Christianity, and bane of Piety, which tend to debauch the affections, to deaden the Conscience, to nourish Wantonness, and feed a fleshly carnal mind, the end of which is death, *Rom.* 13. 13. *Phil.* 4. 8. *Jude v.* 12. 2 *Pet.* 2. 18. *Rom.* 8. 6. *For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.* It is a double content to a generous and well disposed nature, when he doth good for his pleasure. *Games of hazard* (saith a worthy Divine) *do very much discompose the mind; they also provoke passion, and cause much disturbance in the soul for things of nothing. Games that consist in dexterity of body or mind, are much to be preferred before these: Chess will sharpen the wit, but tosse it over much, and toil the spirits, instead of recreating them, which is the proper use of play: Of all Gaming, the less the better; and when it disorders the passions, the least is too much. He that ventures much Money at play, ventures with it not only the tranquillity of his mind; but makes a certain loss of it whatever becomes of the money*—— Squandring away of money in play, is not the way to make Friends of that unrighteous Mammon, that receive a man into everlasting habi-

Du Moulin of Contentment.

tations,

tations, but an Enemy rather that will turn him out of his temporal habitation; it is the way to lose both Earth and Heaven: So then, whether we win or lose, we commit robbery; for if we rob not our Adversaries, we rob our selves, our Families, and God: We may add this also; such unprofitable Recreations devour that precious Treasure of irrecoverable, unvaluable, yea salvation-time; and useth those hours in posting to Hell, which are too much neglected for hastening to Heaven. O how careful then should souls that profess heavenly hopes be of their earthly work, that it be such as may conduce to their accomplishment of them!

Rule 2. Secondly, Set upon earthly things in their proper place and order: *Seek first the Kingdom of God, and the Righteousness thereof, and all these things shall be added to you,* (a) *Mat.* 6. 33. Let God have the uppermost Throne in your hearts, the fore-foot in your walk, the first stroke in your work; give heavenly things the precedency, both in estimation, affection and time, as things of greatest worth, and to which you are chiefly obliged: That's the due order and method of Heavenly Traders, to begin every day and work with God; serve God first, and then your selves: Set apart some time for Religious Duties, before you set upon earthly employments. Men will not go abroad into unwholsom air fasting: The things of this world have a contagious breath in them: Break your fast with God every morning, before you adventure on heart-ensnaring businesses: Labour with God

(a) *Cætera aut adsunt, aut certe non oberunt.*

first

firſt for his preſence with you, his wiſdom to direct you, his grace and ſtrength to help, ſecure and bleſs you in your earthly labours. Antidote your hearts with Divine Cordials every morning, before you get into the Peſt-houſe of this World, and let ſomething of Scripture lye neareſt thy Soul for counſel, comfort, quickening every day: He (ſaith *Auguſtine*) that hath taſted the ſweetneſs of Divine Love, will not care for temporal ſweetneſs. Meddle not with the Thorns of this World, till you have fenced your hearts and hands by Prayer, and the Sword of the Spirit: 'Tis more haſte than good ſpeed to run into the World before you have ſpoken with God: The lawful way to Earthly Employments lies by Heavens Gates. Chriſtians, God will ſue you for Treſpaſſes if you take any other way to your Trades and Employments in the World, than his preſcribed way of Religious Duties. Beſides, you have need of God's Eye and Hand in every thing you do: You know not the Snares and Deaths that lye in your Employments, and the dangers, you are ſubject to in every ſtep you go, and in every thing you do: You may go forth in the morning, and never return more; ſome have died as *Iſrael* did, with meat in their mouths; others have fal'n down dead in their work, broke their Necks in a Journey, been found dead in the way: O ſet on earthly work in God's way; go not about the World till you have been with God, and ſecur'd your All in his Hands.

Rule 3. Thirdly, Keep your earthly buſineſs within the bounds of due time. He that hath allotted

allotted you your work, hath allotted you your time for it: it consists not with man's state, relation and interest, to be arbitrary in any thing, but to walk by rule. *There is a time for every thing under the Sun, Eccles.* 3. 1. *A time for every purpose, and for every work, vers.* 17. *Job* 7. 1. As there is an appointed time to man on Earth; so there is an appointed time to man for earthly things: He that hath set bounds to the World, hath not left worldly employments without bounds, but hath fixed mens Earthly Affairs within their proper season. *Psal.* 104. 23. *Man goeth forth to his work and to his labour until the evening.* The Psalmist acknowledges here the power and providence of God in setting bounds to his Creatures; bounds to the Sun and Moon, *Vers.* 19. *He appointed the Moon for seasons, and the Sun knoweth his going down*: Bounds to the day and night. *Verse* 20. *Thou makest darkness, and it is night*: He limits the labours of wild beasts and men; the beasts have their preying-time confined to the night. *Verse* 20. 22. *And it is night wherein all the beasts of the Forrest do creep forth; the Sun riseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their Dens.* Men have their working-time allotted in the day: *Man goeth forth to his work and labour until the evening*; that is, to the end of their working-day, which consisteth among the *Jews* of twelve hours. *John* 11. 9. *Are there not twelve hours in the day?* the usual time for men to dispatch their earthly work in. *The Lord would not* (p) (saith

(p) *Providentia ergo Dei noluit sic prolixam operandi continuationem ut hominum vires nimium atterat, sed modum constituit.* Musculus)

Muſculus) *have mens labours drawn out ſo far as to wear out their ſtrength, but hath ſet bounds to it.* As the Lord would not have the World to take up mens hearts; ſo he would not have it to eat out their time, or incroach on theſe ſeaſons that are due to greater concerns. God, Nature, Grace, thy own Soul, and the ſpiritual good of others, have their claims, as well as thy earthly callings, to this little inch of this time. O conſume not thy precious day on things that are temporal, and neglect thy opportunities for things Eternal: do not enſlave thy Body beyond thy Beaſts, which have their times of reſt; nor exhauſt that ſtrength which better things call for, upon an empty periſhing World. Exceſſive labours beyond their due time, do argue either too much deſire of theſe things, or too little Faith in God, and are reprov'd by the Lord, as the vanity and practice of them who are not his beloved ones, *Pſal.* 127. 2. 'Tis lamentable to ſee ſuch as would be thought the Heirs of Heaven, ſo exceſſively taken up in enlarging their poſſeſſions on Earth; engroſſing all their time early and late, about their Earthly Affairs, leaving nothing but a few unſerviceable minutes for God and their Souls. O Chriſtians! Keep the ſtream of your earthly affections and labours within the Banks of allowed time; rob not God of his time of ſpecial ſervice; nor nature of her time of needful reſt and refreſhment: nor thy own or others ſouls of time for their ſpiritual concerns, for ſuch poor periſhing things: Shew Charity to thy redeemed Body; make it not a Drudge to thy Earthly Luſts: Man is too noble

noble a Creature to be a Vassal to this World: Tis a sad Spectacle to see the *Nazarites* of Heaven, like *Sampson*, with their Heads shaven, and their Eyes pluckt out to grind in the World's Mill, till they pluck down the House about their Ears, *Judg.* 16. 21. How do Men macerate their Bodies, and starve their Souls, onely to help them with supplies in their passage to the Grave, and all the while neglect the work of God, and their Souls, leaving the reliques of their wasted strength, and the Worlds refuse, for the service of an immortal God. This is not to follow Earthly things by Heavenly Rule.

Rule 4. Fourthly, Be diligent in the use of your working time: take heed you waste it not upon impertinencies, or by needless diversions, or by idleness, and unfaithfulness in your work; this is a sin against both Law and Gospel, which requires diligence and faithfulness in mens earthly callings: Labour and calling-work was man's duty before his fall. *Gen.* 2. 15. *The Lord God took the man, and put him into the Garden of* Eden, *to dress it, and to keep it*: And after the fall, painful labour was injoyn'd and afflicted as a punishment of his sin. *Gen.* 3. 19. *In the sweat of thy Face shalt thou eat Bread, until thou return to the Ground.* This Duty of bodily labour in mens Callings, is of equal sanction and regard with the duties of Gods Worship, being inserted in a positive Law, and as that which is necessary to the sanctifying of God in Sabbaths. *Exod.* 29. 9, 10. *Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work, but on the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God, in it thou shalt not do any work:*

The

תעבוד לא תעשה *The injunction of working in six days* (saith Mayer) *is given in the same commanding terms in the Original, that the injunction of not working in the seventh is: and the same reason is given for both: the one is taken from Gods resting on the seventh day: and the other from his working the six days*: So that not to labour faithfully in thy Calling the six days, is a breach of the Fourth Command, as well as the working on the Sabbath-day: Not as if the six days labour were to exclude all Religious Worship of God on either of these days when the Lord calls to it by extraordinary Providences, as to mourning or rejoycing, or by ordinary tenders of Gospel-mercy, in Week-day Lectures, or the like; for this would cross his other Commands, *Preaching in season and out of season, and labouring for the Bread that endures to eternal life*: This diligent labour doth not exclude private worship every day, and publick worship on week-days; so far as it consists with faithfulness in mens Callings, for which time must be redeemed, *Eph.* 5. 16. but it requires diligent attendance on mens Callings, on the week-days (as opposed to sloath and sinful waste of time) without which God is not duly served on the Sabbath: This diligence in mens Callings is also required in the Gospel, 1 *Thes.* 3. 10. Idleness is a Gospel-scandal, and renders Christians worthy to be abstained from, as not obeying the Word of God; and such must not eat, 1 *Thes.* 4. 11. such are unprofitable Servants, who improve not their Talents for God, and the good of others, *Matth.* 25. 30.

and

and are worse than Infidels, who do not by diligence in their Calling provide for their own, 1 *Tim.* 5. 8.

Rule 5. Fifthly, while your hands are about the world, set a guard about your hearts: The Believers heart is Christ's royal Fort, secure that, and all is safe: *If riches encrease, set not your hearts upon them*, Psal. 62. 10. 'tis the Nature of earthly things, like a malignant Disease, to get to the heart, O how hard is it to meddle with these, and the heart not to becom earthly too! when a gracious Soul hath been with God, and got his heart warm'd, quickened, and drawn out to things above; no sooner doth he return to the world, but all is gone again: such dangerous damps doth this earth send unto heavenly hearts: secure thy heart with God every day, make a new surrender of it to him, before thou get into the snares of thy earthly business: Set a vigilant watch upon thy heart every moment, lest the things of the world steal in and take it captive.

Rule 6. Sixthly, Attend your earthly affairs with a calm and quiet spirit, whatever occurrence you meet with in the world; let your spirits be composed and fixed on God: wonder not at changes in an unsteddy world, which is only constant in unconstancy. (r) *Here have we no continuing City*, Heb. 13. 14. All things here are moving, ascending or descending: Things below are compared to the Moon, *Rev.* 12. 1. which is never at a stay, but hath its constant changes; and like the Sea that ebbs and

(r) *Omnia versantur in perpetuo ascensu & descensu.*

flows every day; and as the fountain of the Sun, which *Pliny* (s) writes of, that the Waters are extream cold and sweet at noon, but boiling hot and bitter at midnight: So mutable are the comforts of this world, then going when they seem most likely to stay. Mans condition in this world at the best, is like the mountain *Potosi, over which there always hangs a Cloud even in the clearest day.* And as 'tis written of a Meer or (t) Salt Marsh in *Scotland*, called *Pochlowland*, where *there are tempestuous Waves raging without wind, yea in the greatest calm.* Christians, be not troubled at the tides you see in these waters of *Marah*: *Riches make themselves Wings and fly away, Prov.* 23. 5. Let none of these lower things trouble you when gone, which cannot content you when present: but one moment of time can make them cease to be yours. *There is but one days difference* (u) saith *Seneca*, upon the burning of the City) *between a great City, and no City*: So there may be but one day, nay but one hour, between a Father, and no Father; a Husband, and no Husband; a man of pleasure, and a man of sorrows; a rich man, and a poor man. Set not that at your hearts which should be at your heels: Men do not use to sigh, look pale, and cry, when Servants leave them: Earthly things are no more; they are given you as handmaids to wait on you, not as a Spouse to lye on your Bosoms; as Servants that come and go, not as Children that abide in the

(s) *Plin.* Lib. 2. C. 103. (t) Desc. of Scotland.
(u) *Una dies interest inter magnam civitatem & nullam. Et quos solitos Ciuitatis vidit, vidit miseros obitura dies.*

house

house for ever. When thou hast lost an earthly comfort, say, A servant is gone from me to day. Keep up a contentation of mind with the portion God gives you here. *Heb.* 13. 5. *Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with those things that ye have*; let them suffice you, as'tis in the Greek; count them enough. If an *Esau* can be satisfied with his crumbs, how much more should a *Jacob* with the childrens bread. *What this and Heaven too?* (saith one.) A little of the world, and much of Heaven, will well agree. I have enough, and enough, and enough, said precious Mr. *Ball*, who yet was very low in the World. When the Earl of *Leicester* offered Mr. *Cartwright* the Provostship of *Eaton* Colledge, saying, it was an hundred pound more than enough, he answered, the hundred pound more than enough was enough for him. *Psal.* 37. 16. *A little that the righteous hath, is better than the revenues of the wicked.* There are two diminutives in the Original (a little little of the righteous man's) let it be never so very little, with righteousness, it weighs down all the abundance of the worldly man's interest; be it more or less, it is enough. O thrice fools are we, like new born Princes weeping in the cradle, knowing not that there is a Kingdom before them, *Rutherford.* I have often thought on that providence concerning *Israel* in the Wilderness. *Exod.* 16. 8. *He that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little, had no lack.* Christian, why so troubled about thy proportion of these things of the footstool? as if your Father knew not what you wanted, or cared

not for you, or could not maintain you: You shall have enough to carry you to your graves, and you can absolutely need no more. *And seekest thou great things for thy self? seek them not, for behold I will bring evil upon all flesh, but thy life will I give thee as a prey in all places whither thou goest, Jer.* 45. 4, 5. You know not what God is doing in the world: Have you but little now? you may shortly have less: Be content with what you have: A little in *Bethel*, if it be but a pillow of stones, with bread and water, is better than the rich Plains of *Sodom*: A piece of bleſt bread in *Immanuel*'s Land, is sweeter, and will go farther than all the Garlick and Flesh-pots of *Egypt*, than a great deal of unsanctified comforts: A small portion of the world, with soul-advantage, is better than a great estate with spiritual losses and temptations. God can multiply a few loaves, make the barrel of meal, and cruse of oyl, to hold out, and your cloaths not to wax old, rather than you shall want enough to carry you through your wilderness, if you will be believing and obedient. Be contented with the talent God gives you to trade upon: Have others more than you? envy them not; (*a*) they have the more to reckon for; and it may be they need more, or they can bear more than you. *That* (saith one) *would sink a small vessel which is but an ordinary burden to a great ship.* Some can better manage a large estate with less

(*a*) When a man grows rich (saith Mr. *Dod*) he does like to go out of a little Boat into a greater Barge, but he is still on the Sea.

trouble

trouble and temptation than others: Possibly that would puff up thy heart with pride, and catch thy feet in snares, that never stirs another's affections, to whom God hath given a braver spirit, or greater mortifiedness to this world. Subscribe to God's wisdom and pleasure, believe his promises, wonder at his mercy, be thankfull for what you have above many; see your All in God, and hope to be shortly with him; and you cannot but be content with your allowance in the world.

Rule 7. Seventhly, Follow your duty, but cast your care on God, abide in your callings, but live above them. 1 *Pet.* 5. 17. *Casting all your care on God, for he careth for you.* Depend not on your wisdom, labour or success in your employments, but upon the promise, love and care of God for you: If the Lord blesseth your substance, don't you bless your selves in it: See an emptiness in all your abundance, and shortness in these to answer your many wants. God can soon make a hole in your money-bags, blow on your encrease, turn your prosperity into contempt, and make your expected comforts as the dream of a night vision. Live not on large barns, but on the full breasts of promises, for the good of what you do enjoy, or for the supply of what you want. The poor Christian hath the keeping of his purse in his Father's hand, the rich in his own hand. If sight fail, live by faith: Faith assures you of the good issue of all difficulties in your way, and gets advantage from the worst condition, and sweetness to mingle with every bitter providence you meet with. It may

be thou hast a great family, and little to live on; lyest in debt, and hast nothing to pay it; hadst a little th'other day, but the Caterpiller and the Cankerworm hath devour'd it; this loss, and th'other stroak hath wasted it: In this case thy duty is to live on God by faith, for a sanctified fruit of his hand upon thee, and for making up this lack by his abundance: When thou canst see no way out of thy perplexing trouble, let thine eye be unto God for help, 2 *Chron.* 20. 12. 2 *Chron.* 25. 8. Go not out of God's way for relief: He that wounds must heal; he only that casteth down can raise up, *Deut.* 32. 30. Neither faint thou in the day of adversity, or way of thy duty, *Prov.* 24. 10. *Prov.* 16. 3. but commit thy way to the Lord, and he will bring it to pass, *Psal.* 37. 5. *Mat.* 6. 25. 1 *Cor.* 7. 32. *Phil.* 4. 6. Take heed of carking cares, and fretful vexings; these cannot lessen thy trouble, but will greaten thy sins; a provident care is thy duty, but a distrustful vexing care, both thy sin and affliction.

Rule 8. Eightly, In all your labours pray for a blessing: If you would live well, you must beg as well as work; add duty to thy diligence, prayer to thy provident care, calling on God, to thy calling in the world: As every creature, so every condition and work is sanctified by the word and prayer, 1 *Tim.* 4. 15. In every undertaking seek to God for counsel. *Prov.* 3. 6. *In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.* Christians should not set upon the smallest matters without enquiring the will of God; not to go to this or that place, to buy or sell,

sell, to do this or that work without seeking to God for direction, *Jam.* 4. 13, 14, 15. *Our journeys* (saith one) *must not be undertaken without asking God's leave*, Dr. *Mant.* on *Jam.* This would evidence a life of dependance on God, and bring all thy Affairs under divine care and blessing; *Abraham*'s servant begins his journey with prayer, *Gen.* 24. 12. 27. and concluded it with praise, *Gen.* 28. 20. And so *Jacob*; *Israel*'s folly in concluding with the *Gibeonites* contrary to the command of God, was laid on their not asking counsel of God. *Josh.* 9. 14. *The men took of their Victuals, and asked not counsel at the mouth of the Lord.* O the snares and disadvantages men are exposed to in their earthly concerns, for not taking counsel from God, and engaging his hand and blessing with them: Prayer will further your work, sweeten your pains and difficulties in it, and secure the comfort and good of it: When you want mercy, seek God for it; when you receive mercy, see God in it, and return praise to God for it.

Rule 9. Ninthly, Though you live in the World, yet be dead to the World: Heaven-born Souls, though in the World, yet are not of the World, but chosen out of it, *Joh.* 15. 19. and crucified to it. *Gal.* 6. 14. *God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the World is crucified to me, and I unto the World.* This crucifiedness to the World (*) (saith *Paræus*) signifies the contempt and despising of this World; he intimates here-

(*) *Se mundum cum omni suo fastu pompa gloria aspernari contemnere, quasi rem nihili, vanam mortuam.*

by, that the World with all its ſcorn, pride, pomp and glory are deſpiſed by him, as a nothing, empty, dead thing. A ſoul crucified to the World ſees nothing lovely and deſirable in this World but God, his Word and Works: there's nothing in earthly things that can be taking with ſpiritual hearts, if God be not enjoyed in them: all the glory of the World is no more to them than a dead Carkaſs, if the love of God breath not through it on their hearts; nay the very Garden of the Lord is a Wilderneſs to them, if the Roſe of *Sharon* be not in it. A mortified Saint wonders that a rational immortal Soul can ſee ſuch worth in riches, pleaſures, honours, and poor periſhing things of this life, which to him are nothing; he can eaſily part with all at the Lords bidding. And he feels no ſuch evil neither in the bad things of this World, as to make men ſtartle at them; wants, loſſes, reproaches, torments for Chriſt, loſe their frightfulneſs to them whoſe hearts love to the Lord Jeſus hath reconciled unto the bittereſt affliction that can befall them for his ſake. *If Chriſt ſtand, and do not periſh,* (ſaith *Luther*) *what matter is it if Wife and Children periſh?* If liberty, eſtate, life and all go, ſo he ſtay: Such ſhould thy heart be in purſuit of theſe things, as one that is dead to the World, and ſits looſe from all its glory, and above all its threatnings; content to have, or not to have; to uſe, or want; to enjoy, or be denied, or deprived of it, as God pleaſeth.

Rule 10. Laſtly, do all your work within the view of death, judgment, and eternity: tranſact

act the employments of every day, as dying persons, who are leaving this World, and liable to a remove every moment: How would frequent and serious thoughts of a near approaching end wonderfully check mens greedy pursuits of this World, and help to keep their actions in a consistency with their accounts. King *Philip* would have it proclaim'd before him every morning, *Remember that thou art mortal*: And when falling upon the Sand he afterwards saw the print of his Body, said, *O how little a parcel of earth will hold us when we are dead, who ambitiously seek after the World while we are living.* When *Severus* was old, he called for an Urn or Pitcher in which the Ashes of a dead person were put, and looking a while on it, said, (a) *Wilt thou contain that man whom the whole World cannot contain?* Alas, what will the whole World be to thee when thou comest to dye? let it seem no more to thee now, who art dying every day: do every thing as strangers and pilgrims here, *Heb.* 11. 9, 13. and as if you heard a Voice every day saying, *Awake, and come to judgment*: *Jerome* thought whatever he did, he still heard that Voice; *Surgite mortui, & venite ad judicium*; Arise ye dead, and come to judgment. When you are travelling to this Market, and the other Fair; think, *Sure I am journeying to the grave, and I know not what dust I shall shortly be shovelled into*: when you are about your work, think, *I am hastening to eternity, and shortly these hands must rot in the grave:*

(a) *An vivum capies quem orbis terra non capit?* Lips.

When

When you promiſe your ſelves great things, as the fruit of your labours, and hope for this gain and the other comfort, ſay, *Death may come between me and my enjoyments, and crop off the hopes of all my labours.* What can be great to him that accounts the World nothing? or long to him that counts his life but a ſpan? Mr. *Dod*, When thou findeſt thy heart running out too greedily after this World, ready to lye, cheat, oppreſs, undermine others to greaten thy intereſt: think on this; *For all theſe things God will bring thee to judgment, and render to thee according to all thy works.*

Secondly, Then do you your earthly work in an heavenly manner, when you do it with an heavenly heart: As is the heart, ſo is the action in God's account: the Lord was much pleaſed that it was in *David*'s heart to build him an Houſe, though he never did it, 1 *Kin.* 8. 18. and diſpleaſed with all that *Iſrael* did in his ſervice, *becauſe their heart was not right with him*, *Pſal.* 78. 37. *Iſrael* did many good works, *they ſought him, they returned and enquired early after God, they remembred that God was their Rock, and the high God their Redeemer*, *ver.* 34, 35. but all this was nothing in God's eſteem, becauſe their heart was not upright in it; they had an earthly, carnal, ſelfiſh, backſliding heart in all they did. If thy heart be heavenly, though thy work be earthly, yet it puts an excellency on it; but if thy work be heavenly, and thy heart earthly, God doth reject and deſpiſe it: the heart is the root of every action, and if the root be good, the fruit will be good alſo, *Mat.* 12. 33.

12. 33. *Rom.* 11. 16. If the fountain be ſweet, the ſtreams will be ſweet alſo; and if thy heart be heavenly, thy work is heavenly: A heavenly heart, like the Bee, turns all it doth to heavenly uſes: when the Lord Jeſus had put his hand upon the Spouſes heart, and left ſome myrrh upon her bowels, preſently her hands dropped myrrh, and her fingers ſweet ſmelling myrrh, *Cant.* 5. 4, 5. A heavenly heart perfumes thy earthly work, and makes it wonderfully taking with the heart of Chriſt.

Queſt. *How might I know when my heart is Heavenly in my earthly work?*

Sol. Firſt, A heavenly heart is a heart enlightned to ſee heavenly things; a heart beam'd over with heavenly light, to diſcern things inviſible: An earthly heart is a dark heart, it ſees nothing in God, his Word and Works, ſo as to draw up his heart to Heaven: an earthly heart ſees nothing but earth in heavenly things; and an heavenly heart ſees Heaven in earthly things. The Patriarchs ſaw the heavenly City in their earthly Countrey, *Heb.* 11. 13, 14, 16. They ſaw the promiſes (that is, the things promiſed) afar off, and confeſſed that they were ſtrangers on earth, they ſought a Country, deſired a better Countrey, that is an heavenly; and all that as the product of their heavenly ſight, they ſaw heavenly things in earthly: *Abraham* had an Heavenly eye to ſee Chriſt's day, *Joh.* 8. 5, 6. and *Moſes* a heavenly eye to ſee him who is inviſible, *Heb.* 11. 27. A heavenly heart doth not

not only sees heavenly things, but sees an infinite worth and excellency in them: it sees them to be the best things; it sees a greater glory and desirableness in things above, in one glance of his eye, in one day within his Courts, in one hours communion with him, than in all the World besides: *Mary* saw more advantage in sitting at Christ's feet, than in the many things *Martha's* heart was taken up about, *Luke* 10. 41, 42. *Cursed be that man* (saith the noble Marquess *Galeacius*) *that accounts not one hours communion with Christ above all the World.*

Secondly, A heavenly heart is a heart that savours heavenly things, *Rom.* 8. 5. Nothing goes down so sweet with a heavenly heart as heavenly things, *every thing rejoyces in its like*: An earthly heart delights in earthly things; the Merchant in his Trade, the Husband-man in his Field, Houses, Husbandry, and the fruits of the earth; the voluptuous man in his pleasures; as he that sold his City for a draught of water, crying out when he had done, O that for so short a pleasure, of a King I should be made a Slave! The proud man in his greatness, *Is not this great* Babylon *that I have built, for the house of the Kingdom? Dan.* 4. 30. So doth the heavenly heart relish greatest sweetness in heavenly things: *How sweet are thy words to my taste? yea sweeter than honey to my mouth*, Psal. 119. 103. *His fruit was sweet to my taste; his mouth is most sweet*, Cant. 2. 3. and 5. 16. *My meditation of him shall be sweet*, Psal. 104. 34. *We took sweet counsel together*, Psal. 55. 14. *We talked of the mysteries of Godliness* (saith *Ainsworth*) *of the exer-*

exercises of Religion; (saith another) which I suppose the Prophet meaneth by going into the House of God, as companions consulting (as it were) how they might prepare themselves to his service.

Thirdly, A heavenly heart is a heart that longs and desires after heavenly things: *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? and there is none that I can desire on Earth in comparison of thee, Psal.* 73. 25. *When shall I come and appear before God? My soul thirsteth for thee; my flesh longeth for thee, in a dry and thirsty land where no water is, to see thy power and glory, as I have seen thee in the Sanctuary, Psal.* 43. 2. *Psal.* 63. 1, 2. *My soul longeth, yea even fainteth for the Courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cryeth out for the living God, Psal.* 84. 2. Desires are the natural motions of the heart, and *the best character, and truest lineaments* (saith one (*y*)) *that can be drawn of the minds of men. Practices may be over-rul'd by ends; but desires are always genuine and natural: Hence good men have had most confidence in approving themselves to God, by their affections, and the inward longings of their Souls after him, as being the purest and most unfeigned issues of love, and such as have least proximity and danger from forein and secular ends.* It is an unquestionable evidence of souls risen with Christ, and receiving the stamp of Heaven on the heart, to set their affections on things above: Heavenly desires are the natural breathings of a gracious heart, which can as well live without them, as a man without breathing; a cessation of spiritual

(*y*) Reynold's Treatise of Passion.

desires,

desires, argues soul-swooning, or spiritual death.

Fourthly, a heavenly heart is known by its heavenly thoughts; it will be much thinking of heavenly things: As is the heart, so are the thoughts usually, *For as he thinketh, so is he*, Prov. 23. 7. The thoughts are the first-born of the heart, and strength of the soul, and as natural issues of the mind, as beams are of the Sun; if the heart be evil, the thoughts will be evil; if the heart be good, the thoughts will ordinarily be good, *Matth.* 15. 19. further than corruptions or temptations hinder, *Jer.* 4. 9. 14. If your hearts be heavenly, so will your designed, habitual and well-pleasing thoughts be. *They that are spiritual, will mind the things of the Spirit*, Rom. 8, 5. Try your hearts by your ordinary, quiet and delightful thoughts: Are vain, earthly thoughts your trouble, and holy thoughts your delight?

Fifthly, A heavenly heart will be full of heavenly projects; such a heart will be driving designs for Heaven; his consultations, enquiries and studies, will be how to carry on and promote heavenly interests. *Titus* 3. 8. *This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works*; προϊστασθαι curare & concilio exercere; the word is, might study, devise, and beat their brains how they might do good: That's the temper of earthly hearts also; they will be plotting and contriving ways and means how to advance earthly interests, *Phil.* 3. 19. *Who mind earthly*

earthly things, οἱ τὰ ἐπίγεια φρονοῦντες, *Zanchy*, whose thoughts are in the earth (as the *Syriack* renders it,) that is, they are wholly taken up about earthly things: So 'tis with a heavenly heart, it is taken up about the things of Heaven; it laies holy plots, how to keep down the world and corurption in the soul, and how to make the most of all it hath and doth for Heaven, to secure his interest, and enlarge his possession above: So far as the heart is heavenly, so far is it designing for Heaven.

Sixthly, A heavenly heart is acted and influenced by heavenly motives and arguments; there is nothing sways more with a heavenly spirit than reasons drawn from heavenly things, heavenly pleasures, heavenly honours, heavenly treasures will do more with a heavenly heart than any arguments drawn from things of this life. The nature of the heart is much known by the motives that are most potent with it: A carnal heart is byassed by carnal things: *Who will shew us any good? Psal.* 4. 6. But a spiritual heart with spiritual things: *Lord lift up thou the light of thy countenance upon us: Lot* will choose the plains of *Sodom*; but *Abraham* will prefer walks with God, though in a Wilderness. *David* values his lot, by what it hath of God in it, and counts that most pleasant and rich which helps him to most of God. *Psal.* 16. 5, 6. Tell an heavenly heart how he may be rich, great and comfortable in the World, and it signifies nothing: but tell him how he may pitch his Tent nearest to the Ark and enjoy most of God, how he may keep peace and holiness with-

within, and order his converſation aright to pleaſe God, and you will ſooner win ſuch a heart, than by all the choiceſt propoſals of this life. *Wherewithal ſhall a young man cleanſe his way?* Pſal. 119. 9. *Who ſhall abide in thy tabernacle?* Pſal. 15. 1. *Who will riſe up for me againſt evil doers?* Pſal. 94. 16. *How might I do to get a better heart? to be more rich towards God? Oh that one would give me drink of the Waters of the Well of* Bethlehem! 2 Sam. 23. 15. *How might I do for ſome fore-taſtes of the rivers of pleaſure at the right-hand of God? and to eat of the tree of life in the midſt of the Paradiſe of God,* Rev. 2. 7. Theſe are the moſt taking things with an heavenly Soul; his choice, his delights and tranſcendent intereſts lie on the other ſide of this World, even within the borders of *Immanuel's* Land.

Seventhly, A heavenly heart is a heart that lives upon heavenly things, and is maintained by proviſions fetch'd from Heaven, nouriſhed up in the words of Faith, 1 *Tim.* 4. 6. deſire the ſincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby, 1 *Pet.* 2. 3. My meat and drink is to do the will of him that ſent me, *Joh.* 4. 34. Earthly hearts are maintained by earthly comforts; like the Crows, they live on Carrion; but heavenly hearts live upon heavenly things, they feed on the fineſt Wheat; and, like the *Indian* Bird, *Ule malim, that lives upon the dew, and of the juice of Flowers and Roſes*; heavenly ſouls proſper beſt on heavenly pulſe and water: *Give me underſtanding and I ſhall live,* Pſal. 119. 144.

Eighthly,

Eightly, A heavenly heart walks by heavenly Rules; 'tis led by the Spirit of God, *Rom.* 8. 14. All the threatnings of men cannot upon choice bow him from his path-way of duty, *Dan.* 6. 10. nor the reason or allurements of men draw him with full consent into the way of sin, *ch.* 3. 18. Whatever comes of it he is at a point to keep the commands of God, *Psal.* 119. 106. It chuses to be governed by heavenly Laws. *And we will walk in his paths, Isa.* 2. 3. *As for me and my house we will serve the Lord, Josh.* 24. 15. Such a soul is easily perswaded by the evidence of truth, and will hear what the Spirit saies: *A little child shall lead him, Isa.* 61. 6.

Thirdly, Then are earthly things done in an heavenly manner, when done to heavenly ends and purposes; to obey, please and honor God; when a person can approve his heart to an all-seeing eye, that the great and chief end for which he takes up this or that calling, sets on any employment, is in subordinacy to these great ends, not to please men, to gratifie his owe lusts, to grow great in the world, to enjoy pleasure, ease, reputation, and interest here, but out of obedience to the Maker, Redeemer and Governour of this world, that God in all things might have his will and glory, 1 *Pet.* 4. 11. This is the ultimate end of all Gods works, and should be of man's also. All employments run out of their proper chanel, if they tend not to this Ocean of divine glory: As God is the *Alpha*, so he must be the *Omega* of every action; the first cause must be the last end. God hath made all things for himself, *Prov.* 16. 4. *To him belongs the issues*

(as from death, ſo) *of life*, *Pſal.* 68. 20. Nothing is further good, than it anſwers Gods end; earthly ends ſpoil heavenly work, and heavenly ends puts an excellency on earthly work. Chriſtians, be careful of your ends in all you do: 'Tis not enough to do things that are right, if you are not upright in them: That's unſanctified work which hath not holy aims, and God for its laſt end. To follow your callings, that you might live honeſtly in the ſight of men; that you might provide for your own, and have a competency in the world to carry you comfortably through it, is lawful, as ſubordinate ſecondary ends, but not as your chief and laſt end, to which all your actions muſt be directed; that muſt be ſingly and ſupremely the pleaſing and honouring of God as your higheſt end.

Fifthly, Another part of this Heavenly Trade is driven on & maintain'd in heavenly thoughts: Thoughts are the embrio and conception of actions, which alſo come under the cogniſance and government of Religion. 'Tis a common, but carnal principle, and falſe aſſertion, that *thoughts are free*: They are free indeed from the inſpection of men, but not from the eye and judgment of God, who ſearcheth the hearts, and weigheth the ſpirits, *Jer.* 17. 10. and will bring every ſecret thing into judgment, *Eccleſ.* 12. 14. *Soloman* tells us, *The thoughts of fooliſhneſs is ſin*, *Prov.* 16. 2. *Prov.* 24. 9. And *Peter* tells us, that the thoughts of the heart need forgiveneſs, *Act.* 8. 22. not onely ſinful actions, but ſinful thoughts are forbidden, *Deut.* 15. 9. and

and the very thoughts as well as words and lives of Christians, are to be brought under the obedience of Christ, 2 *Cor.* 10. 5. The Idea and platform of every considerate action, is first drawn in the mind and inward thoughts: No work is rightly done that wants prævious thoughts and consideration. *Prov.* 16. 9. *A man's heart deviseth his way*; he weighs, considers and deliberates about the way he is to go in, and the course of life he is to drive; he counts the time, cost, and every thing that must go to his work. *Prov.* 31. 16. *She considereth a field and buyeth it.* So 'tis in this Heavenly Trade; there must be devising of the way, serious thoughts and considerations, how to mannage it to best advantage; how to get in, and put off wisdoms goods; how to strengthen grace, to dispatch duty, to obtain the favour of God, and dwell in his presence; how to improve mercy, and how to ensure glory. The Heavenly Trade can never be carried on without heavenly thoughts. Inward working thoughts about God and godliness, are of wonderful use to further a holy life: They warm and chear the heart under troubles, *Psal.* 94. 19. engage and fix it on God, and render his presence desirable: Heavenly thoughts fire the heart, and inflame it to holy actions, *Psal.* 139. 17. *Psal.* 39. 3. and are a choice preservative against sin, *Psal.* 4. 4. 'Tis greatly useful to encrease knowledge, and attain to deep wisdom and understanding. *Dan.* 12. 4. *Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall encrease*: That is, their thoughts shall be working on truth, busily employed to find out the

meaning of the word, *looking on one side, and on the other side* (saith Mr. *Fenner*) and by this means shall come to a great thriving in knowledge. Men will never be religious to purpose, or be their crafts-masters in this Heavenly Trade, till they be more spiritual and heavenly in their thoughts. Christians, make conscience of your thoughts; *they must come to judgment*; wash your hearts from whence they come, *Jer.* 4. 14. and watch your thoughts whither they go; check your thoughts when they begin to wander; quicken your thoughts when flat; fix your thoughts when floating; spiritualize them when carnal; exercise them when slothful; set them on their proper and profitable objects, and hold them to their work in divine and heavenly meditation every day, which is part of your Heavenly Trade, and hath a mighty tendency to soul-enriching, *Psal.* 4. 4. *Psal.* 63. 4. *Psal.* 104. 34. *Gen.* 24. 63. *Psal.* 1. 2. *Psal.* 77. 12. *Psal.* 139. 8.

Meditation is a calling in the thoughts from its straglings and undue employments, fixing them on, and holding them to their peculiar work: 'Tis the travel of the mind in the search of some spiritual good, from such things as duty and providence lay before it; it weighs things and actions in the ballance of truth; it turns things up-side down, and looks on both sides, and through them, that it may take a right estimate of them: 'Tis the running to and fro of the cogitations to encrease knowledge, *Dan.* 12. 4. Meditation sifts things and truths, to divide the flower from the bran, and truth

from

from errours; it helps to a clearer, and more sensible view of truth and excellency; with the Chymist, it extracts the spirits and quintessence of things; it warms the heart, and fires the affections, raises desires, engages the will, enlightens and enlivens the conscience, and helps to feed the soul on divine truths, to feast it with divine love, it draws nourishment from ordinances, sweetness from promises, instructions from the creature, and good from providences. Without Meditation a person cannot receive the good that's offer'd to him, or do the good that is required of him. The Word preached doth not profit hearers, for want of Meditation to digest it; threatnings promises, counsels, encouragements, don't affect the soul, or effect their errand and message, for want of a serious and settled consideration of them. O what profit might Christians get to their souls, were more time spent every day in right Meditation! Believer, charge thy heart with this duty of daily Meditation, which is as needful as Prayer, Reading, and any acts of holiness, and allow some time constantly each day for this holy exercise of thy serious thoughts and contemplations. To meditate on God, his Word and Works; on the Soul, its being, immortality, duties, evils, and interests; on the World, its vanity and emptiness; on Sin, its nature and issues; on Holiness, it's excellency and blessed advantages; on Death, judgment and Eternity, with whatever might yield instruction and profit: Urge thy conscience with the command of God, the practice of the Saints, the great necessity, and

many advantages of this duty; consider the great and usual averseness of thy heart to it, which doth manifestly bespeak its spirituality and excellency; for the more nature is indisposed to a duty, the more of God is usually in such a duty: think also of thy manifold losses and disadvantages thou hast sustained by thy neglect of it, and pray hard for the spirit to help thy soul in the due performance of it, which hints I can only leave with thee without further enlargement, lest it should swell this Volume beyond its designed bounds.

Sixthly, If you would drive on this heavenly Trade, you must be keeping up heavenly converses every day, and upon every occasion; much of earthly Trades is carried on by earthly discourses, this way they drive bargains, and barter away goods: a great many words oftimes go to chaffering, buying and selling: and so is it in this heavenly Trade; Religion is much advanc'd by a spiritual improvement of mens talk and converses; this way did the fearers of God keep alive Religion in evil times, when other helps were wanting, *Mal.* 3. 16. *Prov.* 10. 21. By this souls come to be fed and nourished in their holy Faith, 1 *Tim.* 4. 6. A great deal of good or hurt comes by mens discourses. O the mischief Christians do to each other by their vain, carnal and earthly communications when they come together! *Evil communications corrupt good manners*, 1 Cor. 15. 33. *Whose word doth eat as doth a canker*, 2 *Tim* 2. 17. This way does Satan put off much of his wares, even by Wisdom's Merchants, making

making them to weaken, cool, deaden, and corrupt one anothers ſpirits, ſtir up, feed and ſtrengthen each others corruptions, become temptations and provocations to one another to ſin, by their ſinful corruptions: 'Tis ſad to think how the work of God ceaſes, and the work of Satan proſpers this way: Perſons come warm ſometimes from a Sermon, and are ſoon cool'd by impertinent and vain diſcourſes; come from ſecret duty, when their hearts are quickned and raiſed, and preſently deadned again by ſpirit-quenching diſcourſes. O how many labours of the Saints and Servants of Chriſt, and how many ſtrivings of the Spirit are overturned, and come to nothing by vain and rotten diſcourſes! no wonder the Apoſtle tells us, *The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity; it defileth the whole body, and ſetteth on fire the courſe of nature, and is ſet on fire of hell*, Jam. 3. 6. Through the organ of an unſanctified tongue doth Satan ſhoot his fire-balls of temptation into the hearts of hearers: are you afraid of that fire which burns down your houſes? beware of that fire that burns down ſouls to hell. 'Tis no ſmall part of a Chriſtian's wiſdom to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon, and to order (as his converſation, ſo) his converſes to edification: When the Apoſtle preſſes the *Epheſians* to wiſdom, *Eph.* 5. 17. the next thing he adviſes to is holy conference, *ver.* 19. by mens language are they known of what Countrey they are; ſo are perſons diſcover'd, whether Citizens of Heaven, or the World, by their ordinary and deſir'd language. 'Tis ſaid of *Auguſtine*, he

went not so willingly to a feast, as to a conference to reduce any that erred. *He that is of the Earth, is earthly, and speaketh of the earth; he that cometh from Heaven is above all, and what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth, Joh.* 3. 31. He will be speaking of heavenly things, which he learnt of God: *A good man out of the abundance of his heart bringeth out good things; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh:* The tongue is but the index and bucket of the heart, that tells men what things are within, and draws out of those deeps to others; men use to find out what metals are hid in the earth by the colour of the sand which the waters wash away from the mountains: if the streams be low, the spring is weak; an empty heart yields empty discourses; *By your words you shall be justified, or condemned: The tongue of the just is as choice silver, Prov.* 10. 20. in that it is enriching to those that are near it. *The tongue of the wise is health, Prov.* 12. 18. It sendeth out sound and wholsome words to the strengthening of hearers; 'tis said of the Spouse, *that her lips did drop as the honey-comb, honey and milk are under her tongue,* Cant. 4. 11. *And the roof of her mouth like the best Wine that goeth down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak,* Cant. 7. 9. This doubtless is one reason of the little thrivings of Christians in communion this day, 'tis from their barren and carnal communications; this starves Religion both in thy own soul, and in those thou converse'st with; 'tis not maintained by gracious converses, and soul-edifying discourses.

Chri-

Christians, lay this to heart; how can you bear the charge of all that decay in godliness this day upon your non-improvment of this part of your heavenly Trade?

Lastly, Then do you carry on the heavenly Trade, when you improve every thing to heavenly advantages, getting good from every thing you meet with, do, or enjoy. 'Tis so in earthly Trades, all men seek their gain from their quarters, *Isa.* 56. 11. endeavour to turn every thing to some profit: And so should heavenly Traders be getting some spiritual good from every thing that comes under their hand, and in their way, if ever they intend to thrive: this comports with the great design of God in all his administrations to his people, which is to do them good. *Who fed thee in the Wilderness with* Manna, *which thy Fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at the latter end, Deut.* 8. 16. To this end are his providences directed: *The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him, Ezra* 8. 22. And this leads to the accomplishment of the promises towards Believers: *I will set mine eyes upon them for good, Jer.* 24. 6. I will not turn away from them to do them good, *Jer.* 32. 40. All their occurrences are brought under a promise of working for good. *All things*, the best and worst things of providence, *shall work for good to them that love God, Rom.* 8. 28. And why is this? but that gracious souls should be expecting good from every thing, every affliction, as well as mercy, that doth befall them; and be comporting in all their

their capacities with this design of God, by an improvement of all, to this great end of soul-advantage. *What more good, O Lord?* was the usual saying of a godly man, when the Lord brought any new affliction upon him, with which he was much exercised, and from which he ever got some spiritual advantage.

For this end are gracious souls made capable to use their mercies, to bear and improve their afflictions to some spiritual good; they have a principle of grace planted in their hearts, and of divine light into their minds; and have received rules and instructions of purpose, that they might be able to reach this end: They are made men of wisdom for this end, that they might hear God in affliction, *Mic.* 6. 9. and see God in mercies; and are skill'd in divine Chymistry, that they might extract the spirit of providences, and good of every condition, duty and mercy. 'Twas said of pious Mr. *Dod, that he used to turn Earth into Heaven, by a wise and spiritual improvement of all earthly affairs.* A blessed metamorphosis! and an argument of excellent skill and high attainment in this heavenly Trade, to turn Copper and Brass into Gold, and to convert every thing, the worst things to some good. This (Christians) is your privilege, duty and interest, so to manage every affair, condition, occurrence and experience, as to help on your soul-enrichings.

There

There are nine things especially which Christians should be careful to manage to some soul advantage, to be getting good from them, to the furtherance of their instruction, meditation, mortification to sin, the world, and self; to the strengthening of their graces, raising their affections, quickning to duty, preparation for death, and every trial in the way to it; and for furthering their meetness for glory.

First, Priviledges are one thing which Believers should be getting good from, to these great and noble ends of spiritual good. Every heavenly Trader hath some priviledges which may afford soul-profit.

There are { *Natural* / *Providential* / *Spiritual* } Priviledges.

All which may contribute some profit to the improvers of them; Parts, Youth, Health, Strength, are part of Nature's treasure, and to be husbanded to the use and service of the soul: These are some of those talents the great Housholder gives to his Family, (though in different measures) for improvement, and singular mercies they are, if well used to the Donor's ends and directions. A humble use of Parts to the good of others, and setting of wit, memory, reason, with the choicest intellectuals, and richest endowments of the rational mind, on the service of the soul, 3 *Epist. Joh.* 2. making them hewers

hewers of wood, and drawers of water for the sanctuary of the Lord: A shaving and paring off of the excrements and froth of wit, that they may become *Israelites*, and devoted to the God of *Israel*, and spiritual uses, *Deut.* 21.12. keeping them under the government of the spirit, is a good improvement of them in this heavenly Trade.

You that have Parts and habilliments of Mind, do not prostitute them to the pleasure of the flesh, and the service of sin, but resign them to the use of the spirit, towards your enrichings with true wisdom, and encreases in the knowledg of God, which brings salvation. When sprightly Parts and sparkling Wit are inlaid with grace, then are they as *Apples of Gold in pictures of Silver*, *Prov.* 25. 11. Oh how amiable are these endowments of nature, when seasoned with grace, when *perfum'd with Myrrh and Frankincense, and besprinkled with the Powders of the Merchant*, *Cant.* 3. 6.

Youthful time is another priviledge for soul-advantage; 'tis the morning of the soul's day, the best and most useful part of time, when appropriated to God and divine uses: what advantage have such for warmth of affection, and dispatches of duty? whereas decrepit age, like an emerited Souldier, hath worn out its serviceable capacities; and as the setting-Sun is attended with evening cold, and shadows, and the close of working useful time. O how unserviceable is old age for transacting the work of the new-birth, when Conscience is sunk down into the deeps of guilt! when the affections

ons are clogg'd with the dirty things of this world, and preengaged to other Lovers; and when the marrow of natures strength has been eaten out by the wasting service of sin. So great and amazing a work is the salvation of a sinner, that it deserves a subject of the choicest capacities to be compleated in, and transacted by: And then is youth profitably spent, when devoted to God, and taken up in the great matters of salvation. You that are yet in your youth and morning-time, let God have the spring of your time, the first-born of your strength, and first ripe fruits of your capacities; let not youthful pleasures have the flower of your time and abilities, leaving the bran for God and your souls.

You that have strength of Body, and a healthful temper, put it to the best use for your heavenly interest. Are you strong to labour? work out your salvation; labour for the bread that endureth; you that have legs, use them while you have them, to carry you up and down after God. If you must eat bread in the sweat of your brows, let it be the bread of your Father's house. If you must rise up early, sit up late, break your rest, exhaust your strength, let it not be all for the world, let Christ have some of your strength, before all be gone; yea, if you have any, let Christ have all.

As there are natural priviledges, so are there providential priviledges also, which are the capacities that providence dispenseth to some, of doing and receiving good beyond others, as liberty, peace, plenty, with other outward mercies,

cies, all which are to be husbanded to the best advantage of your souls.

1. Have you Peace with men? improve it towards the obtaining and securing your Peace with God: Your firmest leagues with men will hold but a little while, if your covenant with God be broken; what can favour with men profit you, if you have frowns from God? If men sheath up their swords, and God's be drawn, thy case is dangerous, and full of trouble. Make this use also of thy present Peace, to prepare for future trouble, and to be the better arm'd when trials come; spend not all thy store upon thy present Peace and Comfort, but save some fragments for times of need. God gives thee a breathing-time, that thou mayest hold out the better in thy race; and spares thee a little rest, that thou mayest be the fitter for approaching trouble.

Have you Liberty? take heed of yokes of bondage, *Gal.* 5. 1. and soul-straitnings. If God set you at large, do not imprison your selves to the world and carnal lusts: Is thy body out of prison? labour to get out thy soul also, *Psal.* 142. 7. Are thy feet enlarged? get thy heart enlarged also, and run the waies of his commandments, *Psal.* 119. 132. Make the most of your Liberty in doing service to God, in attending on his appointments, and in taking all opportunities of doing salvation-work, and enjoying salvation-helps: Be like your Lord, going up and down doing good, while you have opportunity, *Joh.* 12. *v.* 35. If you have spare time, or can redeem it by double diligence from your earthly business, lay

lay it out for God and his people in religious duties, Christian visits, holy conferences: The time may come you may wish for such a priviledge, and long to see one of these days of the Son of man.

Have you yet a liberal portion of the good things of this life? is your garner full, your table spread, your cup overflowing? lay in the sense of these mercies now, as winter-provision to warm your hearts then, when you may not have them to warm and refresh your bodies, and lay them out to refresh those that want them, that they may bless God, for you, glorifie God in you, and procure mercy for you in the day of need: Make not thy self a slave to thy abundance, but make thy plenteous comforts serviceable unto thee.

There are Spiritual Priviledges too, the lot of some, and calls for great improvements. There are Personal Priviledges, the State and Spirit of Adoption, justification of persons, purchased right to pardon and peace with God, freedom from condemnation, assurance of preservation in grace unto glory, with many gifts of grace and spiritual favours which thousands enjoy not. And there are Publick Privilodges of access to God, communion of Saints, a place within the walls of God's house, with variety of soul provisions, an interest in the promises of God, the prayers and graces of his people, things of infinite worth, and purchased at no lower rate than the blood of Christ. You that are interested in those, come under great obligations to behold them with wonder, to

hold

hold them with trembling, and to use them with diligence and faithfulness. You that are planted in the Courts of the Lord, *Psal.* 92. 13, 14. be fat and flourishing; content not your selves with bare priviledges, with dogs to feed on dry bones, but get the marrow, juice, and fattening vertue of all your advantages. Do not with *Lazarus*, lye at the door of your rich Lord, the Dogs licking your sores, when you may go in and be healed.

Secondly, Ordinances are another thing which Believers should be getting spiritual good from: These are the golden pipes through which the Lord pours in the Oyl of grace into his golden Candlesticks, and Gospel-Churches, *Zach.* 4. 12. Showres of Manna to feed his people in the wilderness, and on this side their own Country, *Deut.* 8. 16. These are the Churches breasts to fill and nourish her children unto life eternal, *Isa.* 66. 11. *Gen.* 2. 6, 10. Ordinances are the Mist, the River of *Eden*, by which God waters his Garden; Scriptures are the Mines, Ordinances are the opening of them to such as dig for Wisdom. A considerable part of this Heavenly Trade is driven about these commodities; ply them well, that you may get large incomes of spiritual blessings through them: Take heed of sleeping at these breasts, or playing with them, lest the Lord put them up, or put you off; lie at the pool side, wait at the wells of salvation, and not onely come, but draw out waters of life thence for your needy souls: For which four things are needful.

Prepa-

Preparation.
Attention.
Retention.
Obedience.

First, Prepare before you hear, get the room emptied, swept and garnished: For those provisions of Christ you are called to, bring your pitchers empty and clean, that God may fill them: Come not to clean food with a foul stomach, but get your hearts purged by sound repentance, and wash'd from an evil conscience, and renewed by the Spirit, for the new wine of the Gospel, 1 *Pet.* 2. 1, 2, 3. They must be new born babes, that receive the sincere milk of the Word so as to grow thereby, *Mat.* 9. 17. If a dead Christ must be laid in a new tomb, *Mat.* 27. 60. surely a living Jesus will not come into an old heart, and rotten sepulchre. Spend some time before you go to hear, in searching your hearts, and reviewing your waies, in getting a deep sense of their vileness, and the exceeding sinfulness of your sins, that the fallow field of your hearts may be plowed up, and you sow not among thorns: Take heed you bring not a hard heart to hearing, when *Theresamund* the *Arrian* read *Fulgentius*'s defence of the truth, he praised his wisdom, wondered at his eloquence, commended his humility; yet had his heart so hardned, that he could not submit to the truth. To help you herein, set prayer on work to beg down the Spirit's assistance; bring your hearts to Christ by prayer, that he would

make them clean: If he say, *I will, be thou clean*, thy Leprosie shall be cleansed. Prayer also helps you to suitable provision, and a blessing on it: Hearers prayers help Ministers to preach, and themselves to hear, 2 *Thes.* 3. 1. Souls never thrive better than when Ministers and Hearers be much in prayer for the Word of the Spirit, and Spirit with the Word. *To pray well, is to study well* (a.) *Prayer* (saies one) *is a messenger to fetch that holy seed out of the garner above: Prayer is the former and latter rain to make it grow beneath; pray continually, if thou would'st grow continually.* After Christ had fed the multitude, he went up into a Mountain apart to pray, *Matth.* 14. *v.* 23. *Secret prayer* (saith Mr. *Trap*) *fats the soul, as secret morsels feed the body; therefore it is said to be the banquet of grace, where the soul may solace her self with God, as* Esther *did with* Ahashuerus *at the banquet of wine, and have whatsoever heart can wish, or need require.*

Secondly, Take heed how you hear, hear as for your lives, with holy attention, with fear and trembling. *Ministers* (saith Mr. *Latimer*) *should preach as if Hell were at their backs, and hearers should hear as if life or death were in every word.* Hear with holy affection; many were given up to believe a lye, because they loved not the truth, nor received the word in the love thereof, 2 *Thes.* 2. 10. Hear believingly; the Word preached did not profit, being not mixed with faith in them that heard it, *Heb.* 4. 2. 'Tis by faith the Gospel becomes the power of

(a) *Bene orasse est bene studiisse.*

God

God to salvation, *Rom.* 1. 17. The Arm of God was not revealed on *Israel*, because his report was not believed by them, *Isa.* 53. 1. The Spirit is given out through the hearing of faith: Never expect to profit by hearing, till you joyn faith with hearing.

Thirdly, Keep the Word you do hear; take heed of letting slip the things you have received, *Heb.* 2. 1. Hold fast the truth that no man take your Crown, *Rev.* 3. 11. Be not forgetful hearers, but doers of the Word, *Jam.* 1. 25. Forgetful hearers will never be doers: *Israel's* disobedience was the fruit of their forgetfulness, *Psal.* 78 10, 11. The reason of the Disciples trouble at the Sepulchre of Christ, was said to be their forgetfulness; they had forgotten what he had said to them when he was in *Galilee*, *Luke* 24. 6. Bad memories have many times barren lives: Be much in after-prayer for the Comforter's help to keep the Word for you, and bring it to your remembrance: Prayer opens the heart to take in the Word; and prayer shuts the heart to keep in the Word: keep up meditation of the Word, *Psal.* 111. 91. This chews the cud, and gets out the sweetness and nutritive virtue of it unto the heart and life: This way the godly come to be as trees planted by the waters side, that bring forth much fruit in their season, *Psal.* 1. 3.

Fourthly, Obedience of the Word helps to profiting. The worth of Divine Truths is never fully known until they are liv'd upon; nor its virtue felt till we cleave to it in our conversation, *Prov.* 4. 6. *Forsake her not, and she shall preserve*

love her, and she shall keep thee. Vers. 12. *When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitned, and when thou runnest thou shalt not stumble.* O the sweetness, the pleasure, the strength, the blessedness that they lose who only look on truth, but do not live it! Strangers to a holy life meddle not with the joy that is wrapt up in the Word and Waies of God, *Prov.* 3. 17. *Her waies are waies of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.* The Word of God yields out but half its sweetness, until it becomes the way and walks of men, *Psal.* 10. 11. In keeping them there is a great reward. *My witness is in Heaven,* saith Mr. *William Cooper,* upon his death-bed, *That the love of Jesus, and his peoples souls, made preaching my pleasure, and I had no such joye as in doing God's work. They are blessed that do his Commandment*; not only in that *they have right to the tree of life,* but in that they eat the pleasant fruits of it, and feed upon that hidden Manna unto which bare hearers are strangers.

Thirdly, Get all the good you can from Providences; from favourable Providences, and from frowning Providences: These are the North and the South winds, which the Beloved causes to blow upon his garden, *Cant.* 4. 16. that the spices might flow forth. Providences, whether prosperous or afflictive, are to saved souls but the fulfilling of Divine Purposes, and the accomplishment of precious promises, which are designed for the good of Believers. Observe the Providences of God if you would get good from thence. *Observable things* (saith worthy Mr. *Blair*,) *do follow them that are given to observation.*

vation. Doth God bring thee under smiling Providences, get some good from them: In these the Lord writes legible characters of his Covenant love to his people. O read the tenderness, love, bounty and faithfulness of God in them, and be affected. Get thy heart to write back letters of love and thankfulness to God again; entertain giving Providences with thanksgiving hearts, and the sacrifice of praise 2 *Chron.* 29. 31. Let the Lord communicate with you concerning receiving as well as giving, *Phil.* 4. 15. If left-hand mercies flow in upon you, take heed lest those floods break their bounds, and carry away the banes of your affections and circumspection. Christians, 'tis a safe rule to fear your mercies as well as afflictions: There is usually less fear, and therefore more danger of professing friends, than professed enemies. 'Twas the prayer of Queen *Elizabeth, To be delivered from her friends; as for her enemies she would take care of them.* Further, if you have now a spring-tide of outward mercies, prepare for low-waters: The comforts of this world are not standing pools, but running streams, and rolling Seas, that ebb and flow; expect not too much from them; entertain your comming mercies as strangers, who have their time to go as well as come; *The Lord gives, and the Lord takes, Job* 1. 21.

Get good also from taking as well as giving Providences; be blessing God for them: There is more self-denial and pure love to God expressed in such acknowledgments, than in praises for bestowing mercy, *Job* 1. 2. Besides, divine

grace runs as well through the empty channels, as broad streams of outward comforts: 'Tis the same hand of the Father that uncloaths, which dresses his children; the Fork as well as the Rake belongs to the Covenant of Grace and Peace; neither is love or hatred known by these things, *Eccles.* 9. 1. Some have never found more than when they have lost all: The Lord oft-times makes mens losses their gains, and their gain of earthly things their losses: *Saul* lost his Asses, and found a Kingdom: *Shimei* found his servants and lost his life: Place not then your happiness, no nor your comforts in these things: How many prick their fingers to get a few fading Roses, which as soon wither as they are pluck'd: Think well of God under scattering Providences, and believe he loves you as much when he removes your mercies, as when he gives them: Look to God in Providences; see whence those winds come that blow down your houses, and scatter your comforts; enquire wherefore God contends with you, *Job* 10. 2. Doth not that worm which devours your gourd, breed in your security, pride, unthankfulness, and abuse of them, while you had them? search out the cause of God's displeasure; justifie God in it, and bear his indignation humbly; come down at his feet, kiss his rod, and hear the voice of it: This is to get good from the worst of Providences.

Fourthly, Get good from the world, and things thereof; by seeing its wiles and deceitfulness, its vanity and emptiness, *Mark.* 4. 19. The world is a fading thing, the fashion of it passeth

passeth away and it is gone. Trades-men care not for over-much of those goods that are soon out of fashion, *Eccles.* 1. 2. O care not for the world, the fashon whereof soon passeth away! 1 *Cor.* 7. 31. The world is a dirty thing, 'tis hard to touch it, and not be defiled. Christians, be not like Swine, who love to run into the dirt; and if you would keep your selves unspotted, take heed of the world. The world is a heavy pondrous thing; by faith make it portable, and more easie to be born, 2 *Cor.* 4. 17. that it may not clog your feet, and stop your race towards glory: Faith will soon lessen your burden, and mend your pace; it will turn brass, yea clay into gold, and make it light in carriage. The world is a strange Countrey to the Citizens of Heaven, get good from it, by living as strangers in the world, by making you long the more for your own home, by converting it to the service of your souls, and interest in glory. *The Scorpions in* Caria, *when they sting, kill home-bred people, not strangers.* Apollon. Be a stranger to the world, and it will not hurt thee. The world is a subtle Strumpet, shun her embraces, lye not in her bosom, stop your ears against her charms, and shut your eyes from her allurements. The world is an enemy, beware of it; when it promises, believe it not; when it kisses you, take heed of the sword in its hand, 2 *Sam.* 20. 9, 10. when it cries peace, peace, then fear swift destruction; set thy feet on its fair neck to keep it down; get it nailed to the Cross of Christ, and pierced to death with the sword and spear of the Spirit. Get good from every state and

tion God puts you into, whether high or low, rich or poor: If you are above others in place, be above them in grace; if you enjoy more than others, labour to do more than others, *Matth.* 5. 47. The higher you are in the world, be so much the lower in your own eyes: The tallest Cedars bow most: Ships of the greatest burden draw most water, and go deepest: Exalted Angels rejoyce to be ministring spirits: Yea the Son of God delighted in being the servant of men: *Israel* was a Prince and prevailed with God, and yet counted himself beneath the least of all God's mercies, *Gen.* 32. 10. *By how much the greater I am* (saith *Maximinus*) *so much the more I labour; and the more I labour, the greater I am*, *Paul* the chiefest Apostle, and yet in his own eyes less than the least of all Saints, *Ephes.* 3. 8. Humble your selves when God exalts you; and when you humble your selves, God will exalt you.

Have you much of the world? take heed of puffings up; the more you have, the more you owe; the more you have of Earth, the less you may have of Heaven: The poor in the world may be rich in faith; and the rich in the world may be oft-times poor in faith: If God give you much here, be fearful lest he give you your All here. When one offered *Luther* much gold, he protested God should not put him off with these things. 'Tis said of *Gregory* the Great, he could never read these words, *Son, remember thou in thy life time receivedst thy good things*, without horrour and astonishment, lest having such dignities he should be excluded his portion

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in Heaven. Have you little in the world? you have the less to reckon for; you have the lesser temptations, the fewer bryars and thorns to go through. Are you mean in reputation? you are so much the safer, and the more beneath envy. *'Tis more to you* (said Mr. *Rutherford* to the Lord Keeper) *to win Heaven, being ships of great burden, and in the main Sea, than for little vessels that are not so much in the mercy and reverence of the storm.* Are you low in the world? the more reason you have to lie low in your own spirits; a Prince's heart, and a beggar's purse do not well agree. Are you in want? make more use of Christ's fulness: 'Tis blessed misery that brings souls to Christ for mercy: Had it not been for affliction, Christ would have had but little company whiles in the world: The whole need not the Physitian; the sick, the blind, the deaf, dumb, and possessed of Devils might bless God for their maladies, which were the occasions of bringing them to the Physitian of their souls as well as bodies: 'Twas well for the poor *Canaanite* that her daughter was ill, for by that means she was put upon seeking crumbs, and while she ask'd for them, got the childrens bread to boot, *Matth.* 15. 27, 28.

Fifthly, Get good from your Callings and Employments in the world, by preserving a sense of the snares and dangers that lie in the management of them. If men would take a strict survey of their Calling-carriages, and be true to their observations, they must needs confess

fers there are many evils they are guilty of in the management of them every day; either idleneſs, or exceſs of labours, deceitfulneſs, earthlineſs, lying, cheating, ſelfiſhneſs, covetouſneſs, carnal-mindedneſs, vain diſcourſes, multitude of words, murmuring, unthankfulneſs, with many other ſins of omiſſion and commiſſion, which they are expoſed to in the purſuit of their Employments: Now when the experience and ſenſe of this do keep them more humble and watchful againſt the occaſions and appearances of ſuch evils; when this helps to break and melt the heart before the Lord in prayer, fly to Chriſt in the ſenſe of their weakneſſes and inability to hold up under their temptations for all their help and grace to ſtand, *Epheſ.* 5. 15, 16. And when they labour to keep a tender ſpirit in all their dealings, and a holy jealouſie of their hearts in every thing they do; exerciſing ſelf-denyal, and mortifiedneſs to the world and things below, then they get profit from their Callings, *Prov.* 41. 3. *Pſal.* 141. 3.

When they make their particular Callings to comport with, and ſubſerve their general; when mens buſineſs in the world do not unfit them for, but are helpful in their religious duties, to keep their hearts in a meetneſs for ſpiritual ſervice, even while they are in their earthly Employments, maintaining a walk with God in them, then they get good from their earthly Callings, *Epheſ.* 6. 18. *Titus* 3. 1. Sometimes God bleſſeth your Callings, and makes your basket and ſtore to encreaſe; then to be enlarged in thankfulneſs and preſerve the memory of God's

God's goodneſs, is not only your duty, but will ſweeten the enjoyment of your mercies: *With my ſtaff I paſſed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands*, Gen. 32. 10. To love him more, and ſerve him better, with more chearfulneſs and gladneſs of heart; this is profiting by your Callings.

Sometimes God blaſts your labours, and croſſeth your hopes, makes a breach upon your Trade, follows you with loſſes one after another: In this caſe to look to the hand of God, to ſearch out God's end in all, to get good by it, to be the more weaned from the world, and to ceaſe from earthly ſtays, is a profitable uſe of your Callings.

Sixthly, Be getting ſome good from your company you reſide amongſt, meet or converſe with: The Lord offers, and ſouls may get much good this way: O the mercies that God deals out through mens company! 'Twas well for *Rahab* that ever the ſpies came to her houſe, for by that means ſhe obtained the ſalvation of her ſelf and family. What a mercy 'twas to the woman of *Samaria*, when ſhe came to the Well, that ſhe found Chriſt there, who inſtead of filling her pitcher with periſhing water, by this means got her heart filled with the waters of life, *John.* 4. 15. What good did the Diſciples get by company in the way to *Emmaus*, who by that means had their cold hearts warmed, their weak faith ſtrengthened, *Luke* 25. 15. to the 32. Others have had company fatal to them: Had it not been for *Potiphar*'s houſe *Joſeph* might have eſcaped temptation to uncleanneſs,

Gen.

Gen. 39. 7. And had it not been for *Pharaoh's* house he had not learn'd to swear by the life of *Pharaoh*, *Gen* 42. 15. As long as *Peter* kept with the Disciples, he was faithful and courageous; but when once he fell into evil company, and got into the High Priest's Hall, he presently fell into that fearful sin of denying his Lord and Master, *Luke* 22. 55. *When they sate down together, Peter sate down amongst them.* Christians, beware what company you come into, for the peace and welfare (if not the life) of your souls is much concerned in it: *Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them, Ephes.* 5. 11. *Prov.* 1. 15. *chap.* 4. 14, 15. Chuse not wicked company for advantage sake, as *Lot* did with the loss of his goods, and hazard of his life, and a dreadful fall to boot, *Gen.* 19. 15. 36. Advantage was his end why he chose the plains of *Sodom*, but loss was the issue of his choice: So *Balaam* for *Balacks* goods, run himself into those temptations that cost him his life, *Gen.* 31. 8. Go not into wicked company except duty call you; if you have God's warrant you have his protection; and if by providence, or in the way of obedience, you meet with evil men, be good with them; [*The Sun* (saith *Diogenes*) *visits kennels, and is not defiled.*] either by taking an occasion to do them good, as the *Israelitish* Maid did to her Master *Naaman*, directing him to the Prophet *Elisha* for cure, 2 *King.* 5. 2, 3. Or by putting a stop to their sin, as *David* did. *Psal.* 75. 4, 5. *I said unto the fools, deal not foolishly, and to the wicked, lift not up your horn.* And as *Judah* sought to divert his Brethren

Brethren from their wicked enterprise against *Joseph*, *Gen.* 37. 26, 27. Or by reproving their sin, as *Nehemiah* did the sin of the Nobles, *Neh.* 5. 7. Or by instructing them if ignorant, as *Paul* did the *Athenians*, *Acts* 17. 22, 23. But if they be such like Sons of *Belial*, that the thorns cannot be taken by hand, let them be thrust away, and get your selves fenced that they hurt you not: Take heed of the least compliance with them in their sin. 1 *Tim.* 5. 22. *Be not partakers of other mens sins*; your own are heavy enough; silence in not reproving, with any signs of approving others sins, make them your own.

If you enjoy good company, take heed you miss not of good, or meet with evil from them: good men have their evils; great men are alwaies wise, *Job* 32. 9. And 'tis easier to follow them down, than up the hill, and to imitate their vices, than their virtues; diseases are more communicable than health; men may impart their sickness, but cannot their soundness. O what advantage hath sin for its propagation, when it falls from the hands of men reputed gracious! The errours of good men are not only examples, but arguments unto others to sin also: If *Peter* play the hypocrite, other *Jews* dissemble likewise with him, *Gal.* 2. 13. and no less a man than *Barnabas* is carried away with their dissimulation. If they that are strong do but eat in the Idols Temple, the weak will eat the things offered to Idols, 2 *Cor.* 8. 10. O take care of the evils of good men, which like books published *cum privilegio*, vend the more. An *Esau's* garment will make a *Jacob's* voice to pass; and

where

where good in any man is admired, evil is there seldom feared: take heed you follow no man further than he follows Christ, 1 *Cor.* 11. 11. Implicit imitation is as dangerous in practice, as implicit faith is in judgment: weigh their actions you intend to walk after; let no man's reputation be your warrant for imitation: Eminent persons are File-leaders, which way they turn, the File turns with them: *The leaders of my people cause them to err*, *Isa*, 9, 16. Men usually follow those they commend, (y) and how much the greater they are with whom we converse, (saith *Seneca*) (z) the more is the danger. Get good from good men, else their goodness is nothing to you: what truth you hear from them, receive; and as *Mary* did the Angels words, so do you ponder their gracious sayings in your hearts, *Luke* 2. 19.

When you are in the company of those that are above you in wisdom and grace, be more swift to hear than to speak: The emptiest vessels make the greatest sound; and I have often observed in company, such as have most need to hear and learn, being self-conceitedly wise, will take up most of the discourse; and instead of drawing waters from deeper wells to fill their empty vessels, they will be pumping out that little they have: This surely doth not bespeak the modesty of such, and less becomes their profit. *Origen*, when a child, used to question with his Father about the sense of the Scriptures, and afterwards became a great Scholar.

(y) *Quos effero, refero.* (z) *Quo major est populus cum quo conversamur hoc periculi plus est.*

'Tis

'Tis the observing attentive Christian is usually the most knowing, thriving Christian; who with the Bee, gathers in the Summer, and gets honey from every flower it meets with; and in the Winter spends it. When you meet with empty vessels, 'tis your charity to be putting in, but when you come to deep wells, 'tis your duty and interest to be drawing out, by asking questions, and proposing doubts, as the young man in the Gospel did, *Mar.* 19. 16. and *Nicodemus* and the woman of *Samaria*, *Joh.* 3. 2, 4. ch. 4. 11, 15, 20. to Jesus Christ. The enquiring soul, if it be done in truth, and followed with obedience, will be the most flourishing soul.

Seventhly, Get good from your retirements as well as company; be never less alone, than when alone: Sometimes in pursuance of duty you must be alone, when thou prayest enter into thy Closet, *Mat.* 6. 6. *Retire we must sometimes* (saith Mr. *Trap*,) *and into fit places to meet with God; solacing, and entertaining Soliloquies with him, as* Isaac *did in the field*, Jacob *upon the way*, Ezekiel *by the river* Ulai, *Peter* upon the leads, Christ upon the mountains, *Abraham* in the grove in *Beersheba*, *Gen.* 21. 33. *'Tis no matter* (saith the same Author) *how mean the place be, so it be secret: where there it a* Jeremy, *a* Daniel, *a* Jonah, *a Dungeon, a Lions-Den, a Whale's-belly, are goodly Oratories. If you will not hear me,* (saith *Peter Moice*) *send me to my prison again among my toads and frogs, which will not interrupt me while I talk with my Lord God*, *Acts & Mon.* 122. O how desirable is retirement

ment with God to a soul that hath acquaintance with him! *Antisthenes* being asked what good he had got by Philosophy? answered, that I can converse with my self; much more is it thy interest to converse with God. 'Tis said of that pious man, Mr. *William Sedgwick, that when he was young, while the rest of the Family were at their Games and Dancings, he would be in a corner mourning. Mr.* Greenham, *when at any time he was sick, would suffer no body to sit up with him, that so he might more freely converse with God. Psal.* 119. 62. *David* would rise at midnight to enjoy cummunion with God. O the blessed seasons that gracious souls have had with Christ in their corners! how sweet have their stollen waters of life, and bread eaten in secret, been to their hungry souls! *Prov.* 9. 17. *If the walls of this house could speak* (said Mr. *Hew Kennedy*) *they could tell how many sweet days I have had in secret fellowship with God, and how familiar he hath been with my soul; The fulfilling of Scrip. p.* 442. The Lord doth usually unbosome himself most to his friends when he hath them alone. *Hos.* 2. 14. *I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably to her, or speak to her heart,* (as 'tis in the *Hebrew*:) Upon which words *Stella* hath this note, (a) *God needs no witnesses that he might speak to our souls; when God finds our heart alone, he presently comes in, and sups with it*; and when he observes our soul withdrawn from the cares

(a) *Ut Dominus cum anima nostra loquatur non opus habet testibus. Quando Dominus cor nostrum solum invenit statim cœnaturus cum illo sedit*—

and

and carking thoughts of this World, then is his time to open his great wonders and secrets to it. *Jacob* was never more prevailing with God than when alone; then was the time he got the blessing, *Gen.* 32. 24, 29. *Peter* was alone in prayer with God when he fell into a trance, *Acts* 10. 10. *His soul was as it were removed from the body for a time,* (saith *Beza*) *that he might converse with God* (c). *Elijah* was alone in secret prayer, when the Angel brought him that refreshing feast, in the strength of which he travell'd in the wilderness forty days, 1 *King.* 19. 4. to *v.* 9. O what am I, (said Mr. *Patrick Simpson*, after he had been many hours in his Garden alone, wrestling with God for his deserted Wife) being dust and ashes, that the holy ministring Spirits should be sent by the Lord to deliver a message to me! telling one that overheard him, that he had had a vision of Angels, who did with audible voice give him an answer from the Lord of his Wive's condition; this Woman also to whom, upon importunity, he delivered these words, as she was approaching to the place where he lay on the ground, heard an affrighting noise of a great rushing of multitudes together, and with it a melodious sound: Such a welcome doth the the Lord Jesus give his children sometimes, when he gets them alone into his Chambers and Wine-cellar. O the sweetness persons may find in their solitudes with Christ! *Sampson* turn'd aside when he saw a swarm of Bees and Honey in in the carkass of

(c) ἐπέπεσεν ἐπ' αὐτὸ ἔκστασις, *quasi se moto ad tempus a corpore animo cum Deo colloqui.*

the Lion, *Judg.* 14. 8. 'Tis ſaid of *Jerome*, that living in the wilderneſs, he ſeemed to converſe with Angels. *Contemplation* (ſaith *Gregory*) *is the cleareſt day of internal light*, then are their diſcoveries moſt, when in a holy ſilence with God alone: Retirement (Chriſtian) is an opportunity put into thy hand of in-door work; 'tis God's call into the Mount, *Exod.* 34. 2, 3. *Be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning unto Mount* Sinai, *and preſent thy ſelf there to me in the top of the Mount, and no man ſhall come up with thee.* 'Tis his command to a holy ſilence and ceſſation from other work, that thou may'ſt attend the moſt ſecret concerns of thy ſoul: Improve this time wholly in converſe with God, and attending the affairs of thy ſoul: This is a ſeaſon to take an eſtimate of thy ſoul-ſtate, to try the grounds of thy hope for eternity, to be ſearching into the ſecrets of thy heart, and taking a full review of thy paſt life, and former carriages, *Pſal.* 4. 4. Then is the time to weigh thy mercies and duties, to call to mind God's dealings with thee, and thy carriages towards him; to be ſtudying the wiles of Satan, and the ways of thy duty; the worth of godlineſs, the danger of miſcarrying, and the bleſſedneſs of overcoming, and ſuch like meditations. When you are riding, or walking, or ſitting alone, invite the Lord Jeſus to keep you company, to walk and converſe with you; fill up your vacant hours with ſecret prayer and meditation; take heed of being at leiſure from duty-employment, either in your general or particular Calling, or lawful Employments, leſt being

being too much alone, the Devil strike in for company; no greater temptation can Satan find, than times of solitude not improved.

Eighthly, Get good from occasional objects and occurrences, which are not chance and fortune, as the blind world calls it; but the products of divine wisdom and pleasure towards Believers for their good. *Albane* receiving a persecuted Christian into his house, and seeing his holy devotion, and sweet carriage; he was so much affected with his good example, that he became both a Professor and Martyr; *Bede*. It was not by accident, but divine intention, that *Melchisedeck* should meet *Abraham* to bless him, and *Shimei* meet *David* to curse him; that *Moses* should meet *Jethro*'s Daughter at the well in *Midian*, and that *David* should meet the *Egyptian* in pursuing the *Amalekites*: It was God put it into the thoughts of *Saul*'s servant to advise his Master to speak with the Prophet, by which means he obtain'd a Kingdom: 'Twas by divine disposal, that when *Joseph* was cast into the pit, the *Midianites* should pass by, and lift him up, and sell him to the *Ishmaelites*, and they to *Potiphar*. The Lord is carrying on some part of his work, some piece of mercy or justice, comfort or affliction by all these occurrences, in which his people should be coworkers with him, and be learning something from every passage of providence they meet with, and object they occasionally behold in their journeyings and pursuits of their occasions in the World: What fruitful meditations had *Sampson* from beholding the carkass of the Li-

on, and ſwarm of Bees in it in his journey to *Timnah*? *Judg.* 14. 8. 14. And our Saviour from ſeeing the wither'd Fig-tree in his paſſage from *Bethany* to *Jeruſalem*? *Mat.* 21. 19, to 23. What a lecture did Chriſt read to his Diſciples upon viewing the goodly Buildings of the Temple? *Luke* 21. 5, to the end: He beheld the City, and wept over it, and improved it to ſome inſtruction to his Diſciples, *Luke* 19. 41. He beheld people caſting in gifts into the treaſury, and makes improvement of it, *Mark* 12. 4. Some told him of the blood of the *Galileans* which *Pilate* had mingled with their ſacrifice, and he makes a profitable uſe of it for his Diſciples inſtruction, *Luke* 13. 1, 2. What Sermons hath Chriſt preached, when he took his Text from the waters of *Samaria*? *Joh.* 4. 9, 10. from the *Manna* given to *Iſrael* in the wilderneſs? *Joh.* 6. 26, 27, 31, 32. from the multitudes flocking after him for loaves? Chriſtians, if you would grow rich in ſpirituals, make ſome ſpiritual improvement of all you ſee, hear, meet with in your journeys, dealings, converſes in the World: Thou walkeſt into thy Garden, get ſome inſtruction from the objects that thou caſteſt thy eyes upon: Every herb in thy Garden preaches God to thee (*b*): Thou walkeſt into the Field, go with *Iſaac*'s heart, to meditate upon the creatures and providences of God thou beholdeſt there: Thou lookeſt to the Heavens, let it not be only as the *Phariſees*, to diſcern the face of the Skie, *Matth.* 16. 3. but to ſee the glory of God, and his handy-work,

(*b*) *Qualibet herba monſtrat Deum.*

Pſal.

Psal. 19. 1. with the Chymist, extract some good from every thing thou meetest with. *'Twas said of* Jerome, *he knew how to gather gold out of the dunghill, and honey out of weeds, leaving the poison for spiders.* How will men dig into the bowels of the earth, rack the creatures, spend themselves to get a few shadows, and all the while do nothing to get the substance that endures! and this doubtless is one reason of soul-poverty this day; we trade not with creatures and occurrences that fall in our way to spiritual advantages: Beg spiritual skill and faithfulness to be improving all you see, hear, do or enjoy to soul-profit.

Ninthly, Get good from your falls and miscarriages: Physicians do sometimes make poysons medicinal, and so doth the Physician of value make the diseases of his people turn to their health. Sin is the greatest evil, and yet redemption-grace works good out of it. *David* got good by his fall, it made him the more humble and broken in heart; drew out his heart in stronger cries after grace; made him more watchful for the future against the occasions of sin, *Psal.* 51. 7, 8, to the 12. *Psal.* 39. 1. *Psal.* 141. 3. *Peter* got good from his fall, by keeping an after-sense of the evil of it on his heart. *Israel* by their departure from God came to loath themselves the more in their own eyes, *Ezek.* 36. 31. And *Ephesus*, by a sense of their evil got this advantage, they could not bear evils in others, *Rev.* 2. 2. *As sin abounds, so grace abounds much more*, *Rom.* 5. 20.

Object. *If ſouls may get good from ſin, and where ſin abounds, grace abounds much more: Then why ſhould we be troubled for ſin, and watching againſt it? Why may we not rather ſin, that grace may abound, and do evil that good may come thereof?*

Sol. The Apoſtle anſwers this objection, *Rom.* 6. *What ſhall we ſay then, ſhall we continue in ſin that grace may abound? God forbid*; and proves by ſeveral Arguments.

Firſt, That it cannot be that ſouls intereſted in Chriſt can live or allow themſelves in ſin; Becauſe

Firſt, They are dead to ſin, and therefore cannot live any longer in ſin, *v.* 2. dead men while ſo cannot live, but believers are dead to ſin no longer to live therein, ἔτι ζήσομεν, *amplius*, never more to live in it; they may fall into it, be overcome by it; but to allow it, to deſign it, to make proviſion for it, and to take up encouragements upon choice in judgment, to continue in it; this cannot conſiſt with men dead to ſin, as all ſouls in Chriſt are; for they are baptized into the likeneſs of Chriſt's death, yea into his death, *v.* 3. That as Chriſt died for ſin once to die no more, but was raiſed by the glory of the Father, *v.* 4. ſo they being really dead with Chriſt, ſhould live no more in ſin, but be perpetually dead to it; for this is the very end of Chriſt's death, to deſtroy the old man, the body of ſin, the whole power and Being of ſin in Believers, to be accompliſhed in its time and waies,

waies, *v.* 6. And Christ died in vain, and hath lost the great end of his death, if they that are in him can live any longer in sin; *for he that is dead is freed from sin* (c), *v.* 7. δεδικαίωται being put for ἀπολέλυται, by a Synecdoche, *Piscat.* that is, absolved from the obligation, servitude, dominion and guilt of sin; as an Apprentice is by Law declar'd free, or set free from his Master's rule and power.

Secondly, They that are in Christ are not only partakers of his death, and therein brought into a state of death to sin; but they are partakers of his resurrection, and by it instated in a life of holiness, *v.* 4, 5. that now they should live to God, which cannot consist with a life of sin, *v.* 11, 12.

Thirdly, They that are Christ's are brought under grace, under a Covenant of Grace, opposed to the Law as a Covenant of Works, and therefore cannot be any longer under the dominion and service of sin, *v.* 14. These two Covenants being in that respect contrary, they that are under the Law as a Covenant of Works, are in the flesh, and bring forth fruit unto death, *Rom.* 7. 5. and for that end are Believers set free from the Law, and brought under Grace, that they might serve God in newness of Spirit, *v.* 6. and no longer serve sin.

Fourthly, They are become the servants of righteousness, set free from the service of sin, *Rom.* 6. 18. Your time under sin is out, and you have now no more to do with sin; you are

(c) *Jure & facto absoluti & manumissi a peccato cujus prius premebamur imperio.* Paræus.

anothers servant, and therefore cannot return to the service of sin any more; for you are now servants to God, not for a time, but for ever; you have deliver'd over your selves, sworn over your selves to be the servants of God for ever, and therefore cannot now serve sin: That's his first answer: You cannot, if in Christ, serve sin any longer, nor continue in sin that grace may abound: for if you can consent to live in sin, you are not under grace.

Secondly, You ought not to do it, if you are rational; 'tis not your concernment to sin, because sin is an evil thing.

First, Sin is the greatest slavery in the world, *v.* 16. You are servants to sin, and to Devils; sins are the works of the Devil, 1 *John* 3. 8. which Christ came to destroy; sin is evil in its state; 'tis drudgery, and in its nature 'tis filthy, abominable and shameful.

Secondly, It is attended with sad issues here; it brings forth bitter fruit, *v.* 21. It makes the soul ashamed when awakened, to see what he hath done, and it fills the soul with grief, horrour and torment; it breaks your loins, makes you go halting to your grave; it makes you weary of your life, and fearful to die; it sets your teeth on edge, and fills your bowels with wormwood and gravel. O the dreadful effects of sin here! which makes it no way a souls interest to sin, 2 *Cor.* 7. 11. *Psal.* 51. 8. *Psal.* 38. 4. *Psal.* 119. 120. *Psal.* 55. 4. *Lam.* 3. 19.

Thirdly, As the work is bad, and fruits are evil here, so the wages of sin is death, *v.* 23. As soon as the work is done, they shall have their wages,

wages, which is alwayes paying, and never paid; they ſhall be alwaies dying, and never dead; *whoſe worm never dieth, and whoſe fire is never quenched, Mark* 9. 44. This will be the certain end of them that can chuſe ſin, and live in ſin, if God be holy, and his Word true. And can you then continue in ſin, that grace may abound? God forbid.

O Chriſtians! get good from your ſins; to be aſhamed of them, to grieve and mourn over them, to hate and loath them, to pray and cry againſt them, to watch and ſtrive againſt them, to fly to Chriſt for pardon over them, and freedom from them, to ſhun and avoid the occaſions of them, to have no more to do with them, to ſeek and further the death and total ruine of them, to prize graces, and love Chriſt the more, to be more attentive to his inſtructions, and obedient to his commands, to bleſs God, and rejoyce in Chriſt; when God doth in any meaſure keep you, or ſet you free from ſin, to long for Heaven and Glory, that you may never ſin more, to keep cloſe to Chriſt, and abide in his waies, that you might be the more ſecur'd from ſin, and fitted for glory, *Ezra* 9. 6. *Zach.* 12. 10. *Ezek.* 36. 31. *Rom.* 7. 24. *Prov.* 4. 14, 15. 1 *Theſ.* 5. 22. *Epheſ.* 5. 11. *Epheſ.* 2. 5. 1 *Pet.* 2. 7. 2 *Cor.* 5. 8. *Acts* 11. 23. This is to get good from ſin, and to drive on the Heavenly Trade: That's the ſecond branch of Exhortation to Profeſſours.

3. *Counſel to Earthly Traders.*

The third branch of Exhortation is to Earthly Traders, who meet with breaches and diſcou-

rage-

ragements in the purſuits of their Earthly Trades. This is manifeſtly the caſe of *England* this day: The Lord blows on mens intereſts, makes breaches on their Trades, ſends in wants as an armed man; Trade fails, a blaſt is on mens labours, and the Nation becomes poorer every day: This ſhould be for a lamentation, but few lay it to heart; men murmur and complain; ſome are dejected and ſink in their ſpirits, others ſeeing God plucking their Idols away, hold them the faſter, become more cloſe and covetous; others ſink the deeper into the world, turn more earthly and exceſſive in their carkings and labours; others more griping and oppreſſive; but few in appearance look to God, and make a right uſe of this ſore ſtroak. Now towards a better improvment of this providence, give me leave to propoſe to all ſuch theſe few Counſels.

Counſel 1.

Firſt, By your diſappointments and loſſes in your Earthly Employments, be convinced of the tranſcendent excellency of this Heavenly Trade (which you have, it may be, in purſuit of thoſe, too much ſlighted:) There are no ſuch iſſues of Wiſdom's Merchandiſe, if duly followed: Religion breeds no ſuch worms to devour its treaſures; *Riches and honour are with me, yea durable Riches and righteouſneſs; My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold, Prov.* 8. 18, 19. There are no ſuch hazards in the waies of God, as here in my earthly buſineſs I am expoſed to: I labour hard and can hardly live on't, I ſow much, and

and bring in little; I eat, but have not enough; and drink, but am not filled; I cloathe me, but am not warmed; I earn wages, but put it into a bag with holes; I look for much, and it comes to little, and when I have brought it home, the Lord blows upon it, *Hag.* 1. 6, 9. But 'tis not so in that Heavenly Trade I have neglected; there are no such disappointments; they that sow to the Spirit, in due time do surely reap; they that labour for that bread, shall have it given to them. O how do Wisdom's Merchants prosper when I decay! their faces shine, their basket is blest; whatever they have in the world, 'tis enough for them; they eat their bread with gladness, and singleness of heart, and are freed from those anxious cares and fears I am almost consum'd with: That's the best Trade, I now see it; when all fails, that holds; when others famish, that feeds; when others undo men, that enriches them: O blessed Calling! thou excellest them all. This is one good use of your earthly wastes, to see the excellency of Heavenly Treasures.

Counsel 2.

Secondly, See God in these afflictions that lie upon your Earthly Trades and Interests: Affliction cometh not forth of the dust, *Job* 5. 6. nor promotion from the East, or from the West, but God is the Judge, he putteth down one, and setteth up another, *Psal.* 75. 6, 7. 'Twas not the wind, the fire, the *Chaldeans*, or *Sabeans* that undid *Job*, but it was God that took away, it was by his permission all those losses came,

Job

Job 1. 21. This help'd *Job* to a due deportment under his troubles, that he ſaw God in it: *He doth not fall out with man, or complain of the Devil; he is not angry with chance or fortune, with ſtars or conſtellations, but looks to God in all. Is there any evil in the City, and the Lord hath not done it? Amos* 3. 6. *I form the light, and create darkneſs; I make peace, and create evil, Iſa.* 41. 7. *Iſrael* decayed in their eſtates, and God ſaies, 'twas he that blowed upon them: Men uſually lay it on the times; cry out of one, and other, but few look to God, and that's one reaſon men make no better uſe of this Rod, becauſe they do not ſee it in the hand of a holy God. You will never lay your hand on your mouths, till you caſt your eyes on God in theſe troubles, nor take a right way for cure before you ſee the hand that ſmites you, *Pſal.* 39. 9.

Counſel 3.

Thirdly, Search out the cauſe of them; You will not find the remedy, till you ſee the reaſon. *Shew me wherefore thou contendeſt with me, Job* 10. 2. *Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the puniſhment of his ſin? let us ſearch and try our waies, and turn again unto the Lord, Lam.* 3. 39, 40. The Lord may well ſay to the Complainer, *Friend, I do thee no wrong, Mat.* 20. 13. And as *David* did to *Eliab, What have I now done? is there not cauſe?* 1 *Sam.* 17. 29. Hath God conſumed your eſtate, broken your Trade, brought you to a morſel of bread? and is there not cauſe? There are ſeveral ſins which do uſually prove waſting to mens earthly intereſts.

Firſt,

First, A letting down of Religion, and decaying in this heavenly Trade, is usually followed with wastes on mens outward comforts and interests, as hath been already shewn: *Godliness hath the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come*, 1 *Tim.* 4. 8. When that flourisheth, all things go well: when Religion goes down, nothing prospers. 2 *Chron.* 24. 20. *Why transgress ye the Commandments of the Lord, that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken the Lord, he hath also forsaken you.* For this letting down of Obedience did God threaten to make *Israel* waste, and a reproach; to send evil arrows of Famine, and to break the staff of Bread. *Ezek.* 5. 14, 16, 17. *Because ye multiplied more than the Nations round about you, and have not walked in my statutes, neither have kept my judgments, neither have done according to the judgments of the Nations round about you; you have increas'd in abomination more than the Heathens and Nations round about you, and have not kept these Laws, and done that Righteousness which they have done*: [Greenhill,] *Therefore behold I, even I, am against thee*: ——*Moreover, I will make thee waste, &c.* Falling back in holiness will make men fall back in the world too, bring a curse on their abundance. Now this decay of Religion is the sin of this day, as hath been fully demonstrated.

Secondly, Declension in the worship of God hath been followed with declensions in mens interests: *Mal.* 1. 9. *Israel* brought to God a corrupt thing, the blind, and lame, and sick, the worst of the flock, and departed from God's Ordi-

Ordinances, and the Lord brought on them a curse; (*d*) *I will even send a curse upon your blessings, yea I have curs'd them already, because ye do not lay it to heart. To give glory to God,* (saith *Cocceius* (*e*) that honour and worship that is due to him: They had corrupted Gods worship, and God corrupted their seed, *Mal.* 2. 3. I will destroy your fruits before they are ripe; which *Cocceius* thinks was fulfilled in that great famine in *Claudius* his days, mentioned *Acts* 11. 28. They had made the service of God contemptible, *Mal.* 1. 7. and God made them contemptible: *Chap.* 2. 9. *Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people,* נבוים *according as you have not kept my ways, but have been partial in my law: you have cast dung on my Ordinances,* (for such are corruptions, פרש in God's worship;) and I will spread dung on your faces; *Mal.* 2. 2. *Even the dung of your solemn Feasts,* excrements. (*f*) I will instead of seed throw so much dung upon you, even the excrements of your corrupt service; as the defilement thereof shall even overcome and ruine you: For these corruptions in the worship of God, did God stretch out his hand over *Israel,* and diminish their ordinary food, delivering them to the will of them that hated them: *Ezek.* 16. 26, 27. *I have cut thee short of thy allowance,* (*g*) *I have diminish'd thy por-*

(*d*) *Lege talionis ut Domos ipsorum vastet qui Domum Dei non curant.* (*e*) *Quia non revocatis ad animum dare divino nomini gloriam,* ἀφορίζω ὑμῖν τὸ ὦμον Sept. (*f*) *Tanta copia stercorabo vos sementis loco ut fimo inquinati plane obruamini;* Jun. (*g*) τὰ νόμμα σοῦ *demensum tuum.*

tion,

tion, [Greenhill] *thy lawful things*, (*b*) Sept. God's worſhip is his name, by which he is known and diſtinguiſh'd from all Idols, *Exod.* 20. 4. his glory, *Rom.* 1. 23. To corrupt his worſhip, is to defile the place of his Throne, *Ezek.* 43. 7. and to defalcate, and cut off his tribute and revenues from the earth: And no wonder if God blaſt their Trade, who adulterate his Treaſure.

Thirdly, A covetous with-holding from God turns away the bleſſing of God on mens labours, and tends to poverty. *Prov.* 11. 24. *There is that ſcattereth, and yet encreaſeth; and there is that with-holdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.* Many think that loſt which is laid out for God, and be-think nothing but what goes to pious uſes. O how ſparingly do moſt ſow, as if they thought their ſeed caſt away! and thence 'tis they reap ſo ſparingly, 2 *Cor.* 9. 6. Mens former charity, rather like ſhowers than ſtreams, are dried up; and therefore are God's ſhowers with-held alſo: expences for God having been many, ſeems now burdenſome, through mens ſelf-love and unbelief. While *Alexander* had hope for more, he never wanted a heart or hand to part with the Frankincenſe and Gold he had: certainly mens Faith fails when their Charity fades: Few in their ſcarcity dare, with the Widow of *Zarephtah*, give the firſt cake to the uſe and ſervice of God, 1 *King.* 17. 13, 14. No wonder the barrel of Meal and cruiſe of Oil fails; 'tis Chriſtians wearineſs in well-doing, and defectiveneſs in

(*b*) *Statutum cibum tibi*; Lat.

ſcatter-

ſcattering for God, hinders their reaping and gathering, *Gal.* 6. 9. This was one of thoſe ſins that brought a curſe and devourer on *Iſrael*'s encreaſe, *Mal.* 3. 9, 10, 11. and is ſtill as pregnant of blaſtings and mildews as ever it was.

Fourthly, Greedy deſires after the World are oftentimes followed with diſappointments: *Ye looked for much*, Hag. 1. 9. *and it came to little*, ἐπὶ ὀλίγον, *Sept.* To look with deſire and affection. 'Tis mercy in God, when mens hearts run too faſt after the World, to lay ſome blocks in their way, to hedg it up with thorns, that they might not overtake their Lovers (*i*). *Hoſ.* 2. 6. Thorns in mens way is ſafer than ſpears in their bowels, and that would have been the iſſue of ſuch Lovers when they meet. Covetouſneſs is the Hydropick diſtemper of old aged profeſſion: to cure which, the great Phyſitian hath providentially preſcribed abſtinence, and in his holy jealouſy hath made men to read their ſin in their puniſhment. The Lord ſees it dangerous for his people to have much of this World, becauſe it becomes a ſnare to their ſouls; *They that will be rich fall into temptation and a ſnare*, 1 *Tim.* 6. 9. Earthly things are the very bane of Religion, they entangle mens feet, and keep them from attendance on God in his appointments. The invited gueſts had no leiſure to enjoy refreſhments for their ſouls, becauſe of their interrupting intereſts of this World, *Matth.* 22. 5. The things of Heaven ſeem light to ſuch, compar'd with their other

(*i*) *Spes in oculis, luctus in manibus*; Jerom.

things:

things: *They made light of Christ's invitation*, and put men on pleading excuses for neglect of God, and on justifying their omissions of holy duties: *They began with one consent to make excuse*: Christ and his people would have more of mens company, if the World had less of their hearts.

These earthly things do not only hinder mens duties, but their thrivings also under priviledges: 'Tis the cares of this World, and deceitfulness of Riches, that choak the Word, and make men unfruitful, *Matth.* 13. 22. They make careless, sleighty, forgetful hearers; they hinder convictions, quench the motions of the spirit, take away the tastes of divine sweetness, and make all the attempts of Grace fruitless: They take away the heart from God and spiritual things, and so nourish formality and hypocrisie in profession and duties, causing men to draw near with their mouths to God, when their hearts are far from him, *Ezek.* 33. 31. *Isa.* 29. 13. This made *Judas*, *Ananias*, *Demas*, *Simon Magus* such hypocrites in Religion, because they loved this present World, 2 *Tim.* 3. 2, 5. 2 *Tim.* 4. 10.

This weakens faith, blinds the mind, starves the affections, rules the will, and so mans all the royal forts of the soul against Christ; by which the salvation of that soul becomes exceeding difficult.

And they make provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof, feeding the carnal mind, and yielding such nourishment to sin, as that it always resists the Holy Ghost, wins the day, ren-

ders damnation sure to all that are not by a mighty hand redeemed from these spiritual enemies; so that it becomes in such a case needful to starve earthly desires, by a remove of those things that feed and maintain them; and men may look upon those afflictive providences on their interests, as the procurements of their earthly affections: Hastening to be rich, hath poverty at the heels, *Prov.* 28. 22.

Fifthly, Unfaithfulness in mens Callings puts them out of the way of blessing, and ushers in wastes on their interests, *Mic.* 6. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. The Lord had a controversy with his people, *v.* 2. and till this was taken up, all their religious services were to no purpose; sacrifices and duties could not prevail, or stop his displeasure, till their sins were removed, *v.* 6, 7. 'Twas not to wait on God in publick duties was all that he called for, *but to do justice, shew mercy, and to walk humbly with him*, wherein they had been defective; and therefore had he brought a rod upon them, *v.* 9. he had made them sick in smiting them, and would make them desolate, *v.* 13. They should eat, but not be satisfied; and there should be a casting down in the midst of them; they should be blasted in their labours and interests; they should sow, but not reap; tread the Olive, but not anoint themselves with it; have sweet Wine, but not drink it; and then comes to reckon with them, wherefore this was brought upon them; *ver.* 10, 11, 12. *Are there yet the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked, and the scant measure that is abominable? Should I count them pure*

pure with the wicked balance? and with the bags of deceitful weights? for the rich men thereof are full of violence, and the Inhabitants thereof have spoken lies, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouths. They were full of wickedness, and among the rest, were false and deceitful; they did not walk humbly with God, nor justly with men, but were deceitful in their Callings, had false weights, scant measures, were injurious to others, and not just and faithful in their dealings; some oppressed, others defrauded; such as were over others were cruel task-masters, exacting their labours, *Isa.* 5. 8, 3. grinding the faces of the poor, eating them up as bread, *Psal.* 14. 4. by defrauding them of their due, keeping back the hire of the Labourers by fraud and injustice, *Jam.* 5. 4. which they do (saith one) who give them not a proportionable hire, working upon their necessities, sucking out the strength and sweetness of the Labourers, Dr. *Manton.* A sin that cries in the ears of the Lord of Sabbaths, cries out aloud, κεκράγασι, and their groans are entred into his ears, as a God of vengeance to require it, and to give his poor a Sabbath, and rest from their oppressions, A sin that God will surely and severely punish; *He will be a swift witness against them that oppress the Hireling in his wages, and turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me saith the Lord of Hosts, Mal.* 3. 5. Sins join'd with Adultery, Sorcery, and Swearing, provocations in God's ears, and actions that plainly shew not true fear of God in such persons that dare oppress their poor Labourers,

changing their wages as *Laban* did *Jacob's*, *Gen.* 31. 41. These God will surely take in hand; he will be both Judge and Witness against them; he will not delay neither, but proceed speedily to sentence and execution against such as oppress their poor labourers: Of all oppression, the oppression of the poor is greatest, and carries most cruelty in it, to tread on them that are down already, and abuse them that have no helper; to take the bread out of their mouths which are ready to starve, and to defraud them of their wages, which is their life, and God calls it down-right robbery, *Levit.* 19. 13. To build up their houses, and raise up estates upon the ruines of the poor labourers, is to lay the foundation in blood, and hath a woe pronounced against it from the Lord of Hosts, *Hab.* 2. 9, 10, 11, 12. This is one of those sins which bring a people down to the ground, and make them desolate: *Ye have eaten up the Vineyard, the spoil of the poor is in your houses; what mean ye that ye beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor? saith the Lord of Hosts. Her gates shall lament and mourn, and she being desolate, shall sit upon the ground, Isa.* 3. 14, 15, 26. This is a God-provoking, and an estate-wasting sin, and one of the great visible, crying sins of this day.

Sixthly, Another reason why God consumes the interests of men, and makes a breach on their Trade, seems to be this; That by this means he might bring them down to his foot, and bring them back to himself: Prosperity in mens interests feeds their pride, and makes them too high for God's use and pleasure; riches do puff

puff men up: *Thine heart is lifted up because of thy riches, behold therefore I will bring strangers upon thee, the terrible of the Nations, and they shall draw their sword against the beauty of thy wisdom, and they shall defile thy brightness; they shall bring thee down to the pit, they shall destroy thy riches wherein thou gloriest, and counterfeit thy beauty, Ezek.* 28. 5, 7, 8. Men are apt to glory in their riches, and to give that respect to them which is due to God, and this he will not bear, but comes out in indignation against mens Idols, *Jer.* 9. 23. Abundance of earthly interests doth also unfit men for God's use and delight, rich in goods, and poor in grace; prosperity in the world cools mens hearts towards God, and lames their feet in his way: 'Tis the poor of the flock that waits on God, *Zech.* 11. 11. that press his Vineyard, and bear the heat and burden of the day, *Jer.* 52. 15. When men grow full, they are lazy; & when great, they become fearful to adventure for God: *Give me thy shield* (said *Epaminondas* to his servant, when he had got a great sum of mony) *for now thou art grown rich, I am sure thou wilt not adventure thy self into dangers. Smyrna* was the poorest of the seven Churches in *Asia*, but yet was richest in grace and serviceableness for God. *I know thy poverty, but thou art rich, Rev.* 2. 9. This may be one reason why the Lord makes this Nation poor, that he might by this make them pure, he melts away our dross, that we may be the more refined, and takes away our Lovers, that he might come in the room of them: *I will hedge up thy way with thorns; she shall follow after her Lovers,*

but shall not overtake them; and she shall seek them, but shall not find them; then shall she say, I will go and return to my first husband, for then it was better with me than now, Hos. 2. 6, 7. Men seldom return to God fully, till stript of other comforts; not see God to be best, till their condition in the world be bad; and therefore doth God remove these mountains of earthly interests, that his people may the better see and go after himself.

Counsel 4.

Fourthly, If God hath made breaches on your Trade, get the breach between God and your souls composed: *Hos. 4. 1, 2. Hear the Word of the Lord ye children of Israel, for the Lord hath a controversie with the inhabitants of the Land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the Land; by swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing Adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood.* There's a controversy between God and a sinning people (and such are we:) Sinners contend with God, & God by afflictions contends with them, and till this controversie be taken up, there's no peace. *And if ye will not for all this be reformed by me, by these things, but will walk contrary to me, then will I also walk contrary to you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins, Levit. 26. 23, 24. Hear the word of the Lord:* Lay this to heart, they that strive with him shall perish; there is no contending with God; bow we must, or break; return, or be ruined: *wash ye, make ye clean, put away the evil of your doings, Isa. 1. 16.* Get walls

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away your blood by sound Repentance; get into Christ's blood by saving Faith; set upon a thorough reformation, personal, family, publick, each one in his place, help to carry out the uncleanness of thy heart, hand, house and land to the Brook *Kidron*, 2 *Chron.* 29. 16. Get trading-sins removed, if you would have trading mercies enjoy'd: Take every man his Censer, and stand in the gap; pour out strong cries for returning-mercy, that the Lord would cease from his fierce wrath, and turn again, and heal our Land, and bless our substance, accept the work of our hand, and dwell in our Land.

Counsel 5.

Fifthly, Get advantage from decaies in your Earthly Trade, to further your Heavenly Trade; gather materials from your earthly ruines, for your heavenly building. Christians, there's a great deal of good you may get from these evil things in the world, to quicken your pursuit after the things of Heaven.

First, By your earthly losses you may be convinced of the vanity and uncertainty of all things below God: Men are apt to take up too much pleasure in their booths, till God sends a devouring worm and consumes them; and to sit down under their shadows with great delight; and therefore doth God make them like shadows to fly away; what expectations do men raise from their swelling comforts, thinking their mountains are made so strong, they shall not be moved, till the Lord by some levelling providence soon corrects their fond opi-

nion! and what dependencies do we usually take up on those uncertainties, leaning so hard on our reeds, till they break under us, and send splinters into the arm which staies upon them? O the contentment, pleasure, profit, men fancy to be in creatures, friends, relations, honours, estates, before by some killing stroak they see themselves to be deceived! What mercy is it then to meet with disappointments in these groundless hopes, that we may come to see before it be too late, what poor, empty, perishing things all the wares of this lower world are! This way *David* came to have his errour seasonably corrected. And *Solomon*, by a serious review of past enjoyments, comes to see that all was vanity and vexation of spirit, *Eccles.* 2. 1. *Surely every man walketh in a vain shew; they are disquieted in vain; he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them*, *Psal.* 39. 6.

Secondly, Divine rebukes on mens earthly interests, help them to a discovery of those sins that procure them, *Deut.* 31. 17. Afflictions are Christ's clay and spittle to open his peoples eyes, and to bring them to see those evils that have brought those deaths upon their comforts, and breed those worms that have destroyed their substance. Times of correction, are times of instruction, *Job* 36. 8, 9. When *Jacob*'s Sons were cut short of their provisions, reduced to great distress, and plunged in sore dangers, then they thought upon their sin, and wrong done to their brother *Joseph*, *Gen.* 42. 21. *Then they said one to another, verily we are guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul*

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when he beſought us, and would not hear, therefore is this diſtreſs come upon us: Whence one hath this note, *Affliction is a dark condition, yet it brings much light into the ſoul*: Men come to read their miſcarriages beſt by the fire-light of affliction; *then Manaſſeh knew that the Lord was God*, 2 *Chron.* 33. 13. Now the ſoul comes to ſee his abuſe of theſe mercies he hath loſt, his inordinate love to them, and wandrings from God, and this helps to after-wiſdom, and greater freedom from theſe entanglements for the time to come, which is no ſmall advantage to future godlineſs.

Thirdly, By this loſs of earthly things, the ſoul comes to ſee a neceſſity of looking after, and enſureing better treaſures: *Heb.* 13. 14. *Here have we no continuing City, but we ſeek one that is to come.* Uncertainties on Earth ſhould put ſouls the more to look after Heaven. The Prodigal never thought of returning till all was gone, *Luke* 15. 14. to *verſe* 18. The Steward never conſidered how to ſecure his future ſtate, till goods were waſted, and Stewardſhip in danger of removal, *Luke* 16. 1, 2, 3, 4. *Think of ſwimming ſhore* (ſaid Mr. *Rutherford*) *after a ſhipwrack. 'Tis a mercy in this ſtormy Sea to get a ſecond wind, for none of the Saints get a firſt.* This is advantage indeed, when having nothing, you ſeek to enjoy all things; and when the world flies from you, to purſue Heaven the faſter. Could a Heathen ſay, *I never gain'd more than when I loſt all*, becauſe his ſhipwrack became the occaſion of obtaining knowledge; and will not you Chriſtians by your earthly loſſes be

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provoked to make after heavenly interests?

Fourthly, Losses in the world have an advantage through grace to loosen the heart from the world. Afflictions on mens estates are like wormwood on the breast, that tends to wean the hearts of God's children from them: Love of the world hath been the sin of this Age; and the shipwrack of worldly things is the likeliest way to cure it; this disease is best conquered by fasting. Absence of Lovers is sometimes the way to starve affections; and poverty with distress is God's usual method to chastise mens wanton affections to this world. Afflictions when sanctified, are Sanctuary-fire to purge away the drosse of our affections, *Mal.* 3. 3.

5ly. Soul-enlargement is another fruit of sanctified straits, and so a help to the heavenly trade. Christians are never fit to make any speed in the way to Heaven, until their hearts be enlarged *Psal.* 119. 32. Enlargements in the world are oft-times bonds to the soul: He that hath most of the Earth, hath usually least liberty for Heaven. When the Lord cuts short the interest of his people, he doth but knock off golden fetters from their feet, that he may bring their soul out of prison. Afflicting Providences are God's dieting his racers, that they may be more long-breath'd, and swift in their run towards glory. O how imprison'd are redeemed souls in the many things of this world! they cannot have time to pray, read, hear, confer for the entangling affairs of this life, till God by some deaths upon their employments sets them at liberty. Removes of worldly treasures are but

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the taking off of a heavy cloak-bag from the shoulders of *Sion*'s Travellers, that they may the more comfortably travel to their journeys end. Good souls, whiles crouded with earthly businesses, are like persons in the midst of a thicket, and thorny grove, when they would be going forward, one briar hangs in their skirts, and another thorn stops their way; so that when God takes off their interests, he doth but cut out a way for his children to pass the more comfortably and swiftly through the brakes of this world, and lighten the vessel that it might sail faster and safer to its designed port; and is not this advantage?

Sixthly, Sweeter reliſhes of heavenly things are to Believers the bleſſed iſſues of the world's bitterneſs: Harſh Providences on earthly comforts make heavenly things the more pleaſant. Men ſometimes engraff ſweet fruit on crab-tree-ſtocks, and God gives honey to his children at the top of the rod, *Pſal.* 94. 19. [*The thorn is one of the moſt curſed, and angry, and crabbed weeds, and yet out of it ſprings the Roſe, Rutherford.*] The ſweet-meats of this world do too often put Chriſtians pallats out of taſte; to cure which, doth the Lord diſh out his daintieſt meat with ſowre ſauce: Heavenly things never reliſh better, than when there is leſs ſweetneſs in the creature. What a value did *David* put upon ſpiritual things when ſtript of all! *Pſal.* 63. 1. Goſpel comforts will not down with ſuch as are choak'd with the world's delicacies; but when once the Saints are emptied of the world by croſs providences, then is Chriſt precius: & is not this

this a help to Heavenly Traders? O then! the more croſſes you meet with in the world, the more haſte do you make to your Crown. Doth the world fly from you? purſue Heaven the faſter. Doth gain fall? then advance godlineſs: And if your gettings from Earth be ſmall, let your layings out for Heaven be great. And thus much for the third Branch of Exhortation.

4th. Advice to ſuch as are fallen back in Religion.

Fourthly, A word to ſuch as have begun this Heavenly Trade, and are fallen back: This is the caſe of ſome, and may be of more in this hour of Temptation and Apoſtaſie: There are ſome have begun in the Spirit, and are now ending in the fleſh; who have made a fair ſhew, ſeem'd to be ſomewhat, and like blazing comets, drew the eyes of admirers on them for a time, and then fell down to the Earth. Some that have left the very form; others that have loſt the power and life of godlineſs: Many have laid down their Lamp; but more have ſpent their Oil, and are almoſt come to a ſnuff: Some have ſhut up ſhop, are quite gone, and have taken their leave of Religion, reſolving to return no more, unleſs ſafety, credit and intereſt return with them: Others yet ſtay, keep open ſhop, but have little goods; decay daily, and are upon the breaking hand; a waſte is on their intereſts, they have loſt their firſt love, decay'd in ſpirituals; faith, hope, love, zeal, delight in God, and livelineſs for him are quite loſt; as hath been demonſtrated in the uſe of Lamentation.

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The design of this head is only to offer some advice towards the recovery of decayed broken Traders: In which, as hitherto, for better illustration, I shall keep to the metaphor in the Text.

Advice 1.

My first Advice to such in order to their recovery, is to be deeply affected with their evil case.

First, Consider, 'tis no small change for a person that hath lived well, been in reputation with God and men, fared deliciously, been used to the dainties of God's house, and delicacies of his love; have tasted the heavenly gift, and the powers of the world to come; now to be brought to penury, and scarce meet with a sweet morsel from day to day; to be put off with husks and dry bones, and the crumbs that fall from their Lord's Table; to stand at his door, or to wait without for some scraps, when the friends of Christ, and Wisdom's thriving Merchants have their marrow and fat things; this is a great change.

For such as were wont to have a place amongst them that stand by, to converse with the Father of Spirits, to be let into the Presence-chamber, and have the visits of the Comforter, and spiritual fellowship of Saints: Now to be laid aside, and scarcely look'd upon with a divine glance from day to day, no entercourse with God, or fellowship with the Spirit, from one Lords day to another, but to be only company for formalists and hypocrites, and such as are without; this is a great change. O get

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thy heart deeply affected with it!

Secondly, Think also how unlovely, offensive and displeasing an object in the eyes of God, a withered, decayed Professour is; *his soul takes no pleasure in him, Heb.* 10.38. He doth not care for the company of such, they are a burden to him, he loves no more to see them, than men do dead corps in their houses, and rotten trees in their garden; he bethinks the place they stand in as cumbring the ground, *Luke* 13.7. he counts them unworthy of the Kingdom of God, having put their hand to the Plough, and then look back, *Luke* 6. 62. Nothing more troubles his soul, than a lukewarm temper, that was once burning in love, but now is neither hot nor cold; such ride on the stomach of Christ, and make him down-right sick, till he hath vomited them out into the dunghill from whence they came; and is not this matter of trouble to a sensible heart? *Rev.* 3. 16.

Thirdly, Such have little desirableness in the eyes of men also. Who cares to deal with broken Merchants; or keep company with spend-thrifts, that have wasted their estates, and are come to nothing? no more do gracious souls care for converse with backsliders. Decayed Professors are like broken vessels in whom there is no pleasure; and as a withered hand, or broken bone in the body, which hath lost both its usefulness and beauty. A broken Trader in Religion is valued by none; the men of the world cannot endure him, because he hath been seemingly godly; and Saints cannot love him, because he is not really gracious: Such, like Ab-

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solum (when hung by the hair) lye between Heaven and Earth, as unworthy of either; and as a person held in a strait passage, cannot go forward nor backward, he cannot go far enough to keep pace with the prophane, nor go back to fill up his place with the pious; the Saints reject him, the wicked will not receive him: In such a pitiful case is a withered decayed soul, he hath no comelinesse in him for which he should be desired.

Fourthly, They are the greatest losers of any who break in Religion; for they not only lose their own goods but others also, their talents, graces, priviledges and experiences, are their Lord's goods, which they have wasted in riotous living; they lose what they once had, what they seemed to have, or were fair for; and they lose what they hope to have, *Luke* 16. 1. *Mat.* 25. 29. 2 *Epist. Joh.* v. 8. *Gal.* 3. 4. All their enjoyments, tastes, comforts, frames, experiences, are lost: All their profession, faith, love, conscience, are shipwrackt: All their duties, labours, sufferings, come to nothing, if they are not recovered again to repentance. Here men estimate their losses to be great, from the quality, variety or abundance of the things they lose; all which are yet but temporal; but the Treasures that Professors are in chase of, and which they shall surely have, if they be sincere and faithful to the death, are eternal; of all which, by their backslidings (if uncur'd) they are depriv'd: O who can count the sum, and value the worth of those glorious things they fall short of, who fall back, and go down in-

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Christianity, till they come to nothing!

Fifthly, Their case is dangerous also, and their wound hardly healed; not one of many that fall back in Religion, if they go far, recover again. *Joh.* 6. 66. *From that time many of his Disciples went back, and walked no more with him.* When *Judas*, *Simon Magus*, *Hymeneus*, *Alexander*, *Demas*, went off from Christ, they returned no more: *John* tells us of some that went out from them, and thereby declared that they were not of them. 1 *Joh.* 2. 19. *They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us.* The Apostle speaks not of such as fall out of infirmity, falling in the way, which gracious souls may do, both falling into some sin for a time, as *Peter*, and fall back by some abatements of grace, as the Church of *Ephesus*, yet be recovered; such he intends not here; but those that fall out of the way, both totally and finally, these recover no more.

Quest. *If persons that fall back in Religion after a high profession, may never be recovered again; how may one know if he find decaies, and falling back in Religion, whether he be one of those that shall never be healed or recovered more? This is my case, I find great declensions in my soul and conversation, and I fear I shall never be restored, but wax worse and worse, and perish at last.*

Sol 1. First, Are not thy declensions thy choice, upon judgment and consent, but against the

the standing bent of thy heart? the renewed purposes of thy soul through Christ: Thy errour is not thy aim, thou dost not deliberately contrive thy departure from God, but hast a secret would not against every backsliding; then thy backslidings shall be healed again, *Psal.* 119. *v.* 10. *Rom.* 7. 19, 25.

Secondly, Are thy backslidings and spiritual decaies thy soul-trouble, and restless burden, because of thy distance from God as the God of Grace, and Father of thy Mercies; and because of the injury thereby done to thy graces and inner man, and from an enmity in thy nature against sin? Then there is hope in *Israel* concerning this, that thy backslidings shall be healed, *Rom.* 7. 24. *Psal.* 5. 1, 7. *Luke* 15. 21. *Gal.* 5. 17.

Thirdly, Are thy backslidings after thy Effectual Calling, and thy sincere choice of God to be thy peculiar and alone portion? Thou canst appeal to the searcher of hearts, that thou hast taken the Lord to be thy God and only Treasure here, and to all eternity to be thy last end and chiefest good; and hast taken Christ to be the only way, truth and life, thy Lord and righteousness; and hast made a full and actual surrender of thy self and thy All to God in exchange, to be presently, unreservedly, and eternally his, and not thy own, to be led and governed by him only: If so, thy after-errours cannot make void this Covenant, but are under a promise of healing; *such cannot sin unto death, because the seed of God remaineth in them,* 1 *Joh.* 3. 9. They are undertaken to be kept, that they

ſhould not totally and finally depart from him, *Jer.* 31. 18. *Iſa.* 57. 18. *Jer.* 3. 14, 22. *Hoſ.* 14. 4. *Jer.* 32. 40.

Fourthly, Art thou reſtleſs in thy backſlidings, until the Lord doth heal thee? thou canſt give him no reſt till he eſtabliſh thy ſoul, and be as the Dew to thy dry and barren heart: When God ſets a Soul a crying, it's a ſign he will hear: *Jer.* 30. 15, 17. *Iſa.* 19. 22. *A man* (ſaith Mr. *Dod*) *can never be in a bad condition, except he hath a hard heart, and cannot pray? Will he delight himſelf in the Almighty? Will he alwaies call upon God? Job* 27. 10. Backſliders in heart are heartleſs in prayer; as they decay, ſo do they reſtrain prayer, *Job* 15. 4. Ye have ſaid, it is in vain to ſerve God, *Mal.* 3. 14. As ſin becomes more delightful, ſo duty becomes more burdenſom, cold and formal; but a gracious ſoul that ſhall be healed is importunate with God, and will not let him alone, *Exod.* 32. 10, 11. or let him go until he bleſs him, *Gen.* 32. 6. The worſe his condition is, the more fervent his cries are; the more his Piety goes down, the more his Prayers go up, *Pſal.* 6. 2. Such a Soul ſhall be healed, who would be healed; where he works to will, he will work to do.

Fifthly, Are thy Vitals ſound under all thy decaies? then thy conſumption is not mortal: Is thy heart ſincere? thou canſt not hide or reſerve iniquity, but walkeſt before God in truth; thy deſires after grace are not feigned, *Pſal.* 17. *v.* 1. Thy love to God is not pretended, lip-love, but real; thy faith and love are not wholly gone, but maintained in the truth thereof, though

though abated; thou canst not let God go, but hast a secret rest on him, and resolved recumbence on his grace and faithfulness. There is hope of that Tree, though it seems to be cut down, that it will sprout again, and the tender branches therof will not cease, *Job* 14. 7.

Sixthly, If under all thy decaies thou findest a humble heart and contrite spirit; thy backslidings make thee lie low before God, and to become more vile in thine own eyes every day; thy soul-poverty makes thee poor in spirit also, rating thy self beneath the least mercy, and judging thy self unworthy of all that patience, priviledge and mercy shewn to thee; thou dost not fret at afflicting providences, nor charge God foolishly, but beareſt his indignation, justifiest his displeasure, and wondereſt at his forbearance; then will revivings come again, and recovery after thy falling back, *Dan.* 9. 7, 23, 25. *Mar.* 5. 3. *Isa.* 57. 15.

But on the other side, There are five dangerous symptoms of falling back that shall hardly be restored.

First, If thy falling back be before thy falling in with Christ in truth; thy decaies before thy quickenings, then 'tis dangerous: If thy building were on the Sand, and the towring heights of thy frames and profession from which thou art fal'n, were only structures of thy own raising, in which the sanctifying Spirit had no hand, then thy decaies are not likely to be repaired. Art thou a stranger to the new birth, and to any inward change upon thy soul? the principle of thy new profession and actions is

is ſtill an old heart: Thou never didſt take the Lord for thy God and only Treaſure, nor hadſt to this day any heart-union with the Lord Jeſus; then thy fall is dangerous, *Mat.* 7. 26,27. 1 *John* 5. 14. 2 *Tim.* 3. 5.

Secondly, A falling off from the foundation is dangerous: When men depart from the Faith, turn to another Goſpel, and deny the Lord that bought them, fall from the Doctrine of Grace after enlightenings, to a Covenant of Works, laying the foundation of Salvation-hopes upon creature-performances and improvements, when they go from the Rule of Faith and Word of Truth, to natural light, and ſeducing ſpirits, which have not their evidence and approbation from the Scriptures. When perſons at once diſclaim dependency on the true foundation and diſpoſal by the Rule of Righteouſneſs 'tis much to be feared whether ſuch ſhall be reſtored, *Gal.* 1. 6. *ch.* 5. 4. *Heb.* 10. 26, 39. 2 *Pet.* 2. 15. *Heb.* 6. 4, 6.

Thirdly, When men make Merchandiſe of the Truth, and ſell their Profeſſion for worldly intereſt, having loved the reward of iniquity, and made a ſwap of their Religion for advantage-ſake: This is a mighty provocation to the Spirit, when men can ſell themſelves to work wickedneſs, and value the great things of God's Law, of his Truth and Salvation at ſo low a rate; to part with them for a meſs of pottage, and the dirty *Cabals* of this world: 'Tis ſeldom that ſuch find repentance, though they ſeek it with tears: See *Judas*, *Simon Magus*, *Balaam*, *Demas*, *Spira*, What remarks of furious indignation

nation God makes such Apostates to be, who can part with their Religion for worldly interests! 2 *Tim.* 4. 10. 1 *King.* 21. 20. 2 *Pet.* 2. 3, 15. *Acts* 1. 18.

Fourthly, Backsliders in heart shall surely perish, and be filled with their own ways, *Prov.* 14. 14. when falling back is upon choice, and with delight, like a deceitful Bow that is then at rest when its string is broken, *Psal.* 78. 57. When a man casts off Religion as one doth his burden and a beast his yoke, *Jer.* 5. 5. and is glad he is rid of his troublesome work, as one that is got out of prison, *Rom.* 1. 32. This argues a spirit of *Belial*, and a dangerous state: Many have taken up a Lamp upon constraint, or fashion, or interest, or for companies-sake, as the foolish Virgins did, *Prov.* 14. 14. *Psal.* 78. 57. *Jer.* 5. 5. *Mat.* 25. 1. But when opportunity hath offered it self for a fair riddance, they have soon appear'd what they were by their chearful returns to *Egypt*, and the broad way of errour and looseness, falling in with other interests, and finding pleasure in it: Now the world, reputation, and pleasure take away the heart, and they are well-pleased with other Lovers: this is a bad sign of a desperate state of marish-ground that shall never be healed, *Ezek.* 47. 11.

Lastly, When persons are prejudic'd against the means of recovery, hate them that rebuke them in the Gate, *Amos* 5. 10. shun the light, and cannot endure those that would reclaim them from the error of their way, *Joh.* 3. 19. their hearts rise against any attempts to reduce them, *Amos* 7. 10. cannot bear them that are

good, ſlight and hate the people of God, they formerly loved, avoiding their company; jeer and reproach thoſe miniſters, people and ways they once took pleaſure in: this ſhews a dangerous ſtate, ſuch a perſons condition ſeems deſperate, and not far from the Chambers of death. O you that are fallen back in Religion! get your hearts affected with it: do you begin to decay? you know not where it will end: are you gone back? 'tis queſtionable whether ever you may return, and then what will your latter end be? your laſt ſtate will be worſe than your firſt; and if twice dead, you will be pluck'd up by the roots; if after ſhowers and dreſſings you decay, your end will be to be burned.

Advice 2.

Secondly, If you would recover out of your waſting decaies in this heavenly Trade, ſearch out the cauſes, and get them removed. There muſt needs be ſomething more than ordinary, when men who have a good Trade, which may be driven in the worſt of times, and will enſure advantage, if followed, do notwithſtanding fall back and decay: Such is Religion, it will maintain and enrich its followers, if they be not wanting to themſelves; there muſt needs be ſome great cauſes and miſcarriages then that doth caſt back the Profeſſors of Chriſtianity, and bring a conſumption on their ſoul-proſperity: ſome of which may be theſe:

Firſt, When they enter upon this heavenly Trade, and have not a ſtock to ſet it up: Religion is a great thing, and cannot be carried on without

without a ſtock of ſaving-grace to maintain it: Common grace is not a ſutable ſtock for this ſpiritual Trade; it may help men to tranſact the external part, and common works of Religion; but cannot do the inward, ſecret, and choiceſt ſervices of godlineſs: *A ſtranger intermeddles not with its joy, Prov.* 14. 10. no, nor its work; *They that are in the fleſh cannot pleaſe God*, Rom. 8. 8. *The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, Rom.* 14. 17. it lies not in outward duties, *but Righteouſneſs, Peace and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt*; which no Hypocrite can reach to. This ſpoils many, they take up a form of godlineſs without the power of it; and being ſtrangers to the work within, they cannot carry on the works of grace without, which this ſtate calls for; and ſo fall back, and come to nothing. When perſons get ſome knowledg, parts, frames, and temporary graces; they preſently take up a Lamp of profeſſion, and get into the company of the wiſe, climb up to the enjoyment of priviledges, and then ſit down contented, and fall aſleep; and when they come to temptations, and ſpiritual duties, to the work of faith, love, patience, ſelf-denial, mortification, and the like; having not grace to ſupport them, and a principle that ſuits ſuch work, they fall ſhort of duty, and into ſin, and ſo trade, and fall away: Common grace is as a ſtanding pool, which having not a ſpring to feed it, dries up when ſupplies ceaſe, and ſcorchings come; whereas true grace is as a Well of Water, that ſprings up to life eternal.

Secondly, Another thing that caſts back Traders, is this; when they ſet upon an employment, and have not skill to manage it: Every Art hath its principles, rules and myſteries by which it is carried on: to deviate from theſe, is to mar the excellency, and miſs the advantage of it: Irregular actions ſeldom thrive; ſo 'tis with the Heavenly Trade, when perſons ſet upon it, and have not skill to order it to beſt advantage, no wonder if they proſper not, but fall back in godlineſs. *Solomon* directing to this Heavenly Trade, adviſes to get wiſdom as the principal thing in order to it, *Prov.* 4. 7. And when the Apoſtle would further the Saints in holy walking, as the neceſſary way to it, he begs wiſdom for them, *Col.* 1. 9, 10. *That ye may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wiſdom and ſpiritual underſtanding: that ye may walk worthy of the Lord to all, well-pleaſing, being fruitful in every good work.* Two things made *David* thrive ſo much in his proper publick work; Integrity of heart and Underſtanding, *Pſal.* 78. 72. He fed them according to the integrity of his heart, and guided them by the skilfulneſs of his hands: Some Books read it in the plural number in the *Greek*; *In skilfulneſſes*, ἐν ταῖς συνέσεσι, noting the great meaſure of wiſdom which men need who would proſper in their proper work, and order their adminiſtrations prudently, as might moſt further their ſpiritual welfare: The want of which wiſdom and prudence in Chriſtians, to order every thing they do in their general and particular Callings, converſes, conditions and occurrences in the World

to

to the beſt advantage of their ſouls, is one reaſon they thrive ſo little in their heavenly Trade: Wiſdom would teach men to prevent many ſnares and occaſions of evil, and inſtruct them how to get good from every thing they do, which would much advance their ſoul-profiting, for want of which they go back in ſpirituals, and decay apace.

Thirdly, This alſo caſts back Traders; when they are not diligent in the management of their Trade: *A ſlothful Soul ſuffers hunger*, Prov. 19. 15. *and by much ſloth the building decaies; and through idleneſs of hand the houſe droppeth thorough*, *Eccleſ.* 8. 10. They that will thrive in the World muſt be diligent, take all opportunities to carry on their work: *The diligent hand maketh rich, but by ſlothfulneſs men are brought to a morſel of bread.* So 'tis in Religion, when men let down their work, and do not follow it to purpoſe, they ſoon decay, and become ſpiritually poor; this is the bane of many this day: Religion is not their buſineſs; men do but little on the Lord's day, and ſcarce a ſtroke of work is done all the Week after; hear they will, and when that is done, their work is done too: never think of what they hear, or put it to practice from one Lord's day to another: All the Week their heads, hearts, hands, feet, time, ſtrength, diſcourſes, contrivances are wholly taken up about the World; and how can they chooſe but go down the hill, and waſte away in their ſoul-intereſts?

Religion is one continued work, which allows of no intermiſſion, but hath its work every day,

day, and in every thing; break but one link of this Golden Chain of Godlineſs, and it weakens the whole. O the ſlothfulneſs of Chriſtians at this day in their ſoul-buſineſſes! every day is fill'd up with neglects; neglect of prayer, neglect of reading, meditation, conference, heart-watching, grace-cheriſhing-work, forget this duty; paſs by another, cold, ſleighty, formal in all; this ſpoils the proſperity of ſouls. The *Galatians* began well, but did not hold out, they were ſoon weary, *Gal.* 5. 7. Moſt mens journey to Heaven is full of ſtops, and that which makes it moſt miſerable, their lets are of themſelves: *Who hath hindred you?* Mens ſtays are within in their own hearts, they have no heart to do good, *Hoſ.* 7. 11. Love to Religion is almoſt gone, and this makes men weary in theſe pleaſant ways: while affections hold, ſouls are never weary; but when the heart is gone, then every thing is a burden; ſuch will do no more than needs they muſt to quiet Conſcience, and preſerve peace and credit; and this ſtarves godlineſs.

Fourthly, Great and frequent loſſes in mens Trades tend to breaking; and ſo it is in Religion: Chriſtians through their ſloth, formality and unwatchfulneſs ſuſtain many and great loſſes of ſpiritual mercies, and this brings them low. A Chriſtian the other day, it may be, had his graces flouriſhing, his heart warm, his affections quick and lively, his Conſcience pure and tender, his will flexible, and fix'd on God and things ſpiritual, 2 *Ep. Joh.* 8. and a good frame throughout his whole ſoul: but now through his

his careleſneſs all is loſt again, *Gal.* 3. 4. One time he loſes the favour and comfortable preſence of God, *Pſal.* 51. 12. another time he loſes a ſweet ſerenity of ſpirit, and peace with God; then light and convictions are gone; another time enjoyments and experiences are gone; now his deſires after God are loſt, then his Strength is devoured; now Temptations prey upon the Soul, and then Corruptions make a waſte upon it: come to Ordinances, Sermons, Sacraments, and after a great deal of prayer, care, and ſtriving, a little grace and comfort is obtain'd; but through want of watchfulneſs all loſt again: it may be before it ſtirs out of the place, or recovers home to his habitation; the next Company, Diſcourſe, Occaſion, takes away all.

Another time God brings the ſoul into the fire of ſome great affliction, ſickneſs, ſuffering, loſſes; and there melts it into ſome holy frames, humility, faith, love, obedience takes off ſome droſs, puts on ſome beauty, imparts ſome ſoul-advantage; but immediately upon a change of the perſon's condition, when new mercy, health and comfort returns, all the good is loſt again. Now through theſe many and great loſſes in ſpirituals, which gracious Souls ſuſtain, they are brought very low, and come to be ſoon poor and beggerly.

Fifthly, Great waſtes, and large expences, help to make Tradens poor apace; when they turn Spendthrifts, and Prodigals, living above their Eſtates; when their layings out are more than their comings in, this muſt needs bring them

them low: It undid the Steward; *He waſted his Maſters Goods*, *Luke* 16. 1. So 'tis with Wiſdom's Merchants alſo, when they turn prodigals of their graces, mercies, parts, ſtrength, time, and other Goods committed to them, ſpending them on their luſts and carnal contentments, then they ſoon find an alteration.

O, at what a rate do men live in point of time! and at what vaſt expences of their ſhort day upon things of no value, talking, eating, drinking, ſleeping, trifling, ſinning away their precious time, as if they had no employment for it, or no better work to do: Little do ſouls think what a ſmall pittance of day-light they have allow'd for their vaſt concerns, and multitude of great employments; and what madneſs 'tis to be ſo prodigal of this little inch of precious time. O the hours, and days, and years that profeſſing Chriſtians ſpend to no purpoſe! in vain thoughts, fooliſh talking, impertinent converſes, unprofitable duties and labours, which when they ſhall be all reckon'd up by the great Creditor, and a Bill of waſtes put into the hands of Conſcience, and the total ſum of theſe expences read; what amazing ſenſe! what dreadful impreſs! and fretful ſting will this beget when perſons come to dye! As the Queen ſaid, *If her heart were ript open*, Cales *would be found written in it*: So if their hearts could then be as legible as their expreſſions, men might read this there in black, and Capital Letters, *Loſt time, loſt time.*

How great alſo are mens waſtes of graces and peace, wiſdom and capacities, and all for the

the obtaining of ſome poor empty, inſignificant comforts, which periſh with the uſing: There are no locuſts (Chriſtians) like your curſed luſts, which have devoured your precious things; your affections, time, ſtrength and graces; what convictions, reſolutions, hopeful frames, conſcience-tenderneſs, talents, capacities, priviledges, ordinances, providences, have the ſervice of thy baſe luſts, and contentment of thy carnal mind conſumed! and this hath brought thy ſoul to ſuch ſtraits and diſtreſſing exigencies.

When ſouls live above their Capacities and Proportion; that's caſting back, when perſons have little, and yet live high; have but a little light, and yet ſpend that too in works of darkneſs; have but a ſhort day, and yet ſo many hours of that one day conſumed in vanity; this is to live above thy eſtate, and will be ſoon impoveriſhing: When men have but a little grace and ſtrength, and yet adventure upon great temptations, and run into ſoul-ruining dangers, ruſh into vain company, ſet upon entangling affairs, and take much buſineſs on their hands, and yet have but a little portion of Wiſdom and Grace to manage them; this is to live above thy eſtate in Chriſtianity. To be low of ſtature, and yet high in conceit, of little ſpiritual worth, and yet think highly, and ſpeak highly of thy ſelf, and to expect eſtimation from others alſo, is to live above thy eſtate.

To have nothing to maintain thee but what comes in by thy ſoul-labours; no longer work, no longer eat; thy daily bread depends upon thy

thy daily work; ſo poor, and yet in this condition to expect an eaſie life, to lie down to ſlumber, to dwell careleſly, and ſet thy hand but by fits and ſtarts to thy work: This is to live above thy ſpiritual eſtate, and will ſoon bring thee to breaking in this Heavenly Trade.

Sixthly, Great debts are breaking, and will caſt men back in Wiſdom's Merchandiſe; when men owe more than they are worth, and know not how to pay it; run further on book every day, till their credit will paſs no longer; they have often promiſed payment, but ſtill fail'd, and now their word will not paſs, they can get no more Goods, Creditours will not truſt them, but begin to ſuſpect them, and threaten to take them up, then men ſhut up ſhop and break: This alſo is pernicious to Heavenly Traders, when they become unfaithful to God and men, run on ſcore for mercy, but never pay or render to God again; are deep in debt to God for divine goodneſs; receive one mercy after another, one Talent after another, and make no returns of any; God ſees not principal or intereſt, but they remain fruitleſs and unthankful under all; make promiſes of better improvements, but ſtill break them: Come to Sacraments, and renew their Covenant with God, and go away and break it again; make promiſes to God under affliction, that if he will deliver them *this once*, they will never grieve and provoke him more as they have done; make large engagements, if God will hear this prayer, and give that mercy; but when their turn is ſerv'd, forget God, and break all their vows again; be ready

ready to paſs their word on every occaſion, and then look after it no more; this begets a jealouſie in the Lord of Hoſts, that he will truſt them no more, *Deut.* 32. 21. but hold his hand, and part with no more Goods, but threatens to take them up, and to caſt their ſouls into priſon; begins to ſue them in the Court of Conſcience, and to out-law them at the Bar of Juſtice, to ſeize on what they have; then away goes peace, joy, hope, and then comes breaking. Theſe are ſome of thoſe reaſons why Chriſtians go back in Religion, and decay in their Heavenly Trade. O Chriſtians! bring the Plummet to the Line, and thy heart and life to the Ballance, and try from which of theſe comes thy ſoul-decaies, and then get it to bear upon thy heart, till thou art fully convinc'd of thy evil, and willing on any terms to obtain remedy.

Advice 3.

Thirdly, Compound with your Creditour; get your peace made with God through Chriſt; make haſte to prevent a ſeizure on your perſon and goods by a timely compoſition. *Agree with your Adverſary while you are in the way with him, leſt at any time he deliver thee to the Judge, and the Judge deliver thee to the Officer, and thou be caſt into Priſon*, Mat. 5. 25. *'Tis a fearful thing to fall into the hands of an ever-living God, who is a conſuming fire*, *Heb.* 10. 31. *ch.* 12. 29. O tremble in the ſenſe of his righteous Judgment, and force not the Lord by thy delaies to commence a ſuit againſt thee, and to make an entry upon all that thou haſt; *but go humble thy ſelf, and make*

make ſure thy friend, Prov. 6. 3. Fall down before thy Creditour, and ſue for terms of reconciliation; caſting thy ſelf at the feet of mercy, confeſſing thy ſin: Pay the debt thou canſt not; go beg remiſſion, and offer a Surety to diſcharge the ſcore, even ſuch an one as the Father himſelf is well-pleaſed with: Thy Creditour muſt be ſatisfied or thou art undone; but this you can never do: Away to a Mediatour to obtain terms, and to procure your peace; make Chriſt your friend, who is able to ſatisfie all the Father's demand, to croſs the Book, and ſend your diſcharge by the ſpirit of Grace, who can witneſs the pardon of all your Sins to your Conſciences: Come to him in the ſenſe of your folly, bearing your ſhame. Forſake your waſting waies, and with the Prodigal return from your Harlots to your Father's houſe, rating your ſelves beneath the leaſt of his Mercies, and conſenting to the meaneſt condition, ſo he would but take you in again, *Luke* 15. 17, 18, 20, 21. Subſcribe all his terms, and make a new ſurrender of your ſelf and your All to Chriſt, to be no more your own, but more entirely his than ever, *Jer.* 50. 5. Enter into a new Covenant with God in Chriſt, taking him for your Surety, and fetching all your abilities to fulfil it from him, and get thy ſoul more firmly bound to the Lord in it by the bond of the Spirit.

Advice 4.

Fourthly, Set up no more for your ſelves, but enter your ſelves Factors for Chriſt. It may be you traded formerly for your ſelves, and that broke

broke you; if you would prevent that danger for the future, you must be no more for your selves, but for him; trading as his Factors, not your own.

Now three things are required in a Factor, which must be observed also by Wisdom's Merchants, if ever they will drive a thriving Trade in Godliness.

1. *To trade upon anothers Stock.*
2. *To be regulated by anothers Advice.*
3. *To drive on anothers Interest.*

First, If you will be Christ's Factors, you must trade upon his stock; you must not only take all your goods from him, but as his; not only fetch in your graces, abilities, skill, success from him, but use and improve them as his, not as your own, *Joh.* 1. 16. *Of his fullness have all we received grace for grace.* 'Twas not only part of his fulness before it was received, but 'tis his grace after receprion. *Col.* 1. 19. *It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell*: not only the fulness of the Divine Nature, but the fulness of habitual grace, both which are in Christ; the latter is chiefly intended here, which dwells in Christ as in a Head, not for himself only, but for his Body, as Beams in the Sun, and Water in the Fountain for the use of man. The Father hath laid up all that Grace that Believers need here and for ever in the Lord Jesus, as in a Treasury, or Trustee's hands, for their use; or made it over to him not only as a deed of gift, but as a purchase which he hath bought by his Blood for the good and use of his Children: 'Tis his ful-

neſs, right, and intereſt, but for their uſe and advantage, but ſo as the property and diſpoſal be ſtill his. Fal'n man hath for ever forfeited his credit with God ſince his firſt defection, to become any more the diſpoſer of his intereſts and inheritance, or be intruſted again with his own portion. God deals with ſaved ſouls as parents do with prodigal children, ſecures their eſtates in the hand of a Feoffee. Believers Treaſures are laid up in Chriſt, that ſo grace as well as glory, ſanctification and ſalvation may be ſure to them, and not liable to forfeiture or loſs; to be diſpoſed of, and parted with by them as they pleaſe, but be certainly and eternally theirs, that ſo they may come to Chriſt for all they need, as heirs under age, who have no more in hand than what they want, but muſt come to their Overſeers for all they have uſe of; and not only as ſuch, but as Stewards alſo that muſt be accountable for what they have, and how they beſtow it.

Poor decay'd ſouls, Would you recover your loſſes, and renew your Trade? then you muſt come to Chriſt's fulneſs, and be beholding to his free grace for all you need. Do you want grace for your duties, places, tryals, ſufferings? come to Chriſt's fulneſs for your ſupplies; ſend to him by the hand of prayer an intimation of all your wants: Make known your requeſts to him. *Phil. 4. 6. Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and ſupplication, with thankſgiving, let your requeſts be made known to God.* Ceaſe not from following God in the Name of Chriſt with requeſts, till the Spirit meet you with returns.

The

The Lord Jesus hath ordained his people to receive their supplies, sallaries, and stipends from Heaven in the Court of Requests. *Matth.* 7. 7. *Ask, and you shall receive. All things whatever you shall ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive, Mat.* 21. 22. Seek it by prayer, receive it by faith: Go to Christ in the promises for all you want, judging him faithful who hath promised, *Heb.* 11. 11. God's Word is as good as present pay, and shall be fulfilled by him (who cannot lye) to all that by faith receive it, and wait for its performance. *All his promises are in Christ Yea and Amen,* 2 *Cor.* 1. 20. Who came down from Heaven to confirm them with his blood, and is returned to Heaven to fulfill them by his intercession, *Heb.* 7. 25. You may boldly adventure on divine assurance, and shall not be asham'd, if you sincerely roll on Christ in his Word. Be well acquainted with the promises, clear up your interest in them by believing, and expect their fulfilling through Christ. It may be thy graces are low, thy corruptions high, guilt heavy, fears many, refuge fails, thy prayers not answered, no good news from Heaven or Earth; thou prayest, hopest, waitest, but no answer; in this case nothing but firm reliance on divine faithfulness, can keep thy head above water.

Are you in wants? go to that promise, *My God shall supply all your wants, Phil.* 4. 19. *God will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly, Psal* 84. *v.* 11. Do you find changes in your spirits, and frames, and condition? See that word, *Believe in the Lord your God, and you shall be established;*

believe his Prophets, and you ſhall proſper, 2 Chron. 20. 20. Are corruptions high? apply that word, *He will turn again, he will have compaſſion upon us, he will ſubdue our iniquities,* Mic. 7. 19. *Sin ſhall have no dominion over you; for you are not under the Law, but under Grace,* Rom. 6. 14. *Who gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity,* Titus 2. 14. *For this purpoſe the Son of God was manifeſted, that he might deſtroy the works of the Devil,* Joh. 3. 8. *I will ſave her that halted,* Zeph. 3. 19. When thou ſeeſt nothing but witherings and dyings in thy ſoul, apply theſe Promiſes; *So wilt thou recover me, and make me to live,* Iſa. 38. 16. *The righteous ſhall flouriſh like the Palm-tree, he ſhall grow like the Cedars of* Lebanon: *Thoſe that be planted in the Houſe of the Lord, ſhall flouriſh in the Courts of our God, they ſhall ſtill bring forth fruit in old age; they ſhall be fat and flouriſhing,* Pſal. 92. 11, 12, 13, 14. *I will be as the dew to* Iſrael, *he ſhall grow as the Lilly, and caſt forth his roots as* Lebanon: *they that dwell under his ſhadow ſhall return, and ſhall revive as the corn,* Hoſ. 14. 5, 6, 7. *They that wait on the Lord ſhall renew their ſtrength,* Iſa. 40. 31. In theſe, and ſuch like Promiſes, as in Wagons ſent of purpoſe to fetch you, go over to your *Joſeph*, and get them laden with the riches of his Kingdom, that you may be relieved and carried on in your trading for Heaven, improving theſe not as yours, but as your Lord's goods: That's the firſt Trade upon Chriſt's Stock.

Secondly, Follow his inſtructions, be guided by his order in the management of your Heavenly

venly Trade: Take Letters of Advice from your Creditor, how to lay out his Moneys, and how to dispose of his Goods. *Prov.* 3. 5. *Lean not to your own understanding, which is the most close and subtil kind of Idolatry* (saith *Cartwright*) *Seek not after your own heart, and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring*, Numb. 15. 39. Man is mightily propense since his first defection from God, to take the Scepter into his own hand, and to become the Governour of his own ways: But this God cannot bear, as being inconsistent with his Supremacy, and that State also into which Man is by Grace redeemed; which is an absolute devotedness unto God, 2 *Cor.* 8. 5. Ye have likewise chosen the Lord to be your Law-giver and King, if you are his, and are now upon your own consent determinable by his pleasure in every thing you do: The rectitude of every action lies in a conformity to his will, who is your Lord and Soveraign. And as the eyes of a handmaid wait on her Mistress, so should Believers on Christ for direction in all they do, *Psal.* 122. 3. Christians, your former irregularities in the prosecution of your Heavenly Trade, have almost lost you, and cast you back: O be more observant of Divine Instructions for the future! follow your advice, walk by Rule: *As you have received how you ought to walk, and to please God; so abound more and more*, 1 *Thes.* 4. 1. Beg Wisdom of God to know his Will in every thing, to do that which is well-pleasing in his sight, having a warrant for every action you perform both civil and religious; this will be your comfort now,

and your peace in the day of your accounts.

Thirdly, Drive on his intereſt, not your own. *Rom.* 14. 7. *For none of us liveth to himſelf.* God can more juſtly ſay what *Laban* did to *Jacob* concerning his children and goods; *Theſe daughters are my daughters, and theſe children are my children, and theſe cattel are my cattel; and all that thou ſeeſt is mine, Gen.* 31. 43. *The cattel on a thouſand hills are his, Pſal.* 50. 10. *with the corn, wine, wool and flax, Hoſ.* 2. 9. Both the improvement as well as principal are his, *Mat* 25. 27. He hath right to the exerciſe and fruit of your graces and duties, with all that you enjoy and do: Put Chriſt's mark on all your goods; whatever you gain by his talents, put on his account, and let your diſburſments be expended to his uſe. Seek not your own things, your credit, peace, comfort, intereſt, but in ſubordination to him: If the Lord by his Word calls for any of your enjoyments, you muſt let them go: If by his Providence he takes off any comfort, murmur not, ſay, 'Tis the Lord, Let him do what he will with his own, *Mat.* 20. *verſe* 15.

Advice 5.

Fifthly, Follow your Trade better than you have done; remember how former careleſneſs, formality, ſloth, hypocriſie, have undone you, and amend. The ſlothful ſoul is as the door on his hinges, *Prov.* 26. 14. that never makes any progreſs in Religion, or comes to any excellency in Grace. *No Chriſtian* (ſaith Mr. *Sedgwick*) *is ſo able in the habits of Grace, as he who is conſciencioufly frequent in the practice or exerciſe of Grace.*

[*Chriſt's*

[*Christ's Counsel to his Languishing Church.*] Would you recover your state, and come to any eminency in godliness, then make Religion your business: That sleightiness of spirit in the way of God, which lost you at first, will never restore you. *The recovery of a faint soul* (saith the same Author) *will never be effected by faint workings: You did fall into your decayed state by remissive actings, and think you, that which was not able to keep up your graces from sinking, can now quicken and raise them being sunk.* [*Christ's Counsel to his languishing Church*, p. 148.] If negligence did cast you back, diligence must help to recover you: Take more pains with your hearts; follow your work of godliness every day, and in every place; Be early and late in your shops of duty, and in the ware-house of your hearts: Beware of spiritual sloth, and soul-losses; take heed of unfaithfulness with God, Conscience, or others; keep touch with your Creditor; be tender of your Vows to God and Men; keep from prodigality; live not above your condition; waste not precious time, parts and grace in vain; walk strictly in the whole course of your life, keeping your selves from iniquity, and in the love of God. *Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ*, Jude v. 21. Tit. 2. 13.

5th Branch of Exhortation to good Traders in Religion.

Lastly, You, whoever you are that drive on this Heaveuly Merchandise, and have any good Trading in Religion, be you exhorted,

Advice 1.

First, To bless God for good trading: Is it well with your souls? *Doth the South-wind blow upon your Garden, and the Spices flow out?* Cant. 4. 16. *Doth the Fig-tree put forth her green Figs? and the Vine, with the tender Grape, give a good smell?* *Cant.* 2. 13. What reason have you then to be always giving thanks? you whose trading turns to any spiritual advantage: thou canst say, *'Tis good to draw nigh to God; in keeping his Commands is great reward:* The Lord is not a barren wilderness to thy soul; *but peace is within thy Walls, and prosperity within thy Palaces,* Psal. 122. 7. *Thy glory is fresh in thee, and thy bow renewed in thy hand: thy root spreadeth out by the waters, and the dew lying all night between thy branches,* Job 29. 19. *His ways are pleasantness, and his steps drop fatness to thy soul; and he commands his blessing upon thee; and thy faith and love do grow.* Is it thus in any measure with thee? O then bless the Lord with thy soul; let all that is within thee bless his holy Name. Make the Lord thy glory, and triumphing praise: Thhu hast abundant reason to be admiring grace, and exalting divine glory. Because,

First, Soul-thriving is a great mercy at all times; a little spiritual goods is beyond all the World's treasure; one piece of Christ's tryed Gold weighs down all the Pearls and Diamonds on Earth; and whatever can be found below grace, cannot be compar'd with it, *Job* 28. 11, 12. 16. or named the same day with it: The light of

of God's Countenance, pardon of Sin, participation of the Spirit, fulfilling of Promiſes, fellowſhip with the Father, Son, and Spirit; heart-breathings after, love to, and delight in God, are things of ineſtimable worth; if you weigh them in themſelves, or with other things; or if you conſider the grace from whence they come, or price which they coſt: Spiritual thrivings are an Evidence of ſincere love to God, Judg. 5. 31. *Let them that love thy Name be as the Sun that goeth forth in his might*, and of ſpecial love in God to that ſoul, *Tit.* 3. 4, 6. *Eph.* 1. 3, 5, 7. God may proſper in the World thoſe he hates; *Eſau* had his fat things here, but grace and peace are new-covenant-bleſſings, which ſpring from eternal love in the heart of God to that ſoul, *Heb.* 8. 10. *Zech.* 8. 11, 12, 15.

Secondly, 'Tis a ſingular mercy at this time, a mercy that few enjoy in the day we live in: What a rare thing is it, in this long Winter, to ſee a green Olive, a tender Grape appear, or Pomgranate bud? *Cant.* 7. 6. or one Berry in the uppermoſt branch, *Iſa.* 24. 13. It was a peculiar glory put upon the head of *Thyatira*, that ſhe was thriving when other Churches were decaying: *She had works, and works, and the laſt were more than the firſt*, *Revel.* 2. 19. *Epheſus* had loſt her firſt love; *Sardis* had decayed and waſted her firſt ſtrength, and was ready to die: *Laodicea* was luke-warm, ready to be ſpued out by the Lord Jeſus, *Rev.* 3. 1, 8, 16. only *Thyatira* flouriſhed exceedingly, and grew in the Winter; and this honour ſhe had

had, to have it recorded by the Spirit for a Monument in After-Ages. 'Tis not the lot of every one to thrive in evil times; few *Theſſalonians* whoſe faith and love did grow, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 3. A ſingle *Timothy*, who had flouriſhing affections to the things of Chriſt; *I have no Man like minded, Phil.* 2. 20. One *Gaius*, whoſe ſoul out-proſpered his body, 3. *Ep. Joh. v.* 2. A flouriſhing Chriſtian this day is like a Flower in Winter, an Apple-tree amongſt the Trees of the Wood: Surely, if there be a Soul who this day flouriſhes to any heighth of Chriſtianity, who lives in intimacy with God, fares deliciouſly in his Soul, feeding on Matrow, and hidden *Manna*; that he or ſhe is greatly beloved of God. Thy lot, O Soul, is fall'n in a peculiar plot of mercies ground; and ſhould not the Lord Jeſus be admir'd of ſuch a one, ſeeing he is come to him in the fulneſs of the bleſſing of the Goſpel? O bleſs God for this unſpeakable gift!

Thirdly, 'Tis an earneſt of eternal mercy: They that ſow to the ſpirit ſhall reap life everlaſting, *Gal.* 6.8. And ſuch as abound in holineſs, ſhall have an abundant entrance adminiſtred to them into the Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, 2. *Pet.* 1. 11. God will never throw away ſavoury Salt to the Dunghil, nor burn up fruitful Branches: Trees full of ſap are the Lord's Trees, which he will tranſplant into his Paradiſe above, *Pſal.* 104. 16. The Lord's ripe Fruit ſhall be gathered, not ſhaken on the ground; and ſafely hous'd in Heaven. Grace is too precious Seed to be loſt; *Such as ſow it now, though in tears, ſhall ſurely come again, and bring their Sheaves with them, Pſal.* 126. 5. Poor

Poor troubled Soul, God will not despise the day of thy small things, much less thy Soul-enlargements after him; he will be tender of thy smallest blossoms, and secure them into fruit; much more shall thy encreases arrive to the fulness of the measure of the stature of Christ, *Eph.* 4. 15. *God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which you have shewn towards his Name*, *Heb.* 6. 10. It may be thou hast forgotten many a duty and hearty testimony of thy love to Christ, his Name, people, and ways; and canst see nothing in all thou hast done, but art ready to say on every turn; *When saw I thee an hunger'd, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? when saw I thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? or sick, and in Prison, and came to thee? Matth.* 25. 35. But God cannot be so unrighteous to forget it, or let it pass so; but keeps a record of all thy meanest duties, and will make the most of them in the day of righteous judgment. *I know thy works, and thy labours, and thy patience, &c.* Rev. 2. 2. *When thou wast under the Fig-tree I saw thee, Joh.* 1. 48. He takes notice of a *Daniel* by the River *Hiddekel*; of a *Peter* on the House-top; of *Elijah* under the Juniper-tree, 1 *King.* 19. 4, 5. yea, of what was but in *David*'s heart to do, and requites it, 1 *King.* 8. 18. Will not an *Ahasuerus* let the good deeds of *Mordecai* go unrewarded? and shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right, and crown the works of his own hands? *Your labours shall not be in vain in the Lord*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 58. O then be blessing God for the least good he hath

hath wrought in you, and for you, for any proſperity in your ſouls. There are no offerings come up with that acceptance on God's Altar, as Thankſgiving-offerings, *Pſal.* 69.30,31. What a delightful remark did the Lord Jeſus put upon the Lepers return to praiſe him for cleanſing, *Luke* 17. 18. the more ſpiritual, the more rejoycing, *Iſa.* 52. 8. No ſuch thriving ſouls, as God-praiſing ſouls: *Jer.* 31. 12. *Therefore they ſhall come, and ſing in the heighth of* Sion; *and ſhall flow together to the goodneſs of the Lord for Wheat, and for Wine, and for Oyl; and their ſoul ſhall be as a watred Garden, and they ſhall not ſorrow any more at all.*

Queſt. *How might I know whether I have good trading in Spirituals or no, that I might have ground for rejoycing in God? Could I find this Soul-welfare you ſpeak of, I ſhould bleſs God with my whole ſoul; but I fear 'tis otherwiſe; that I am one of thoſe who fall back, and decay in my Heavenly Trade.*

Sol. There are ſeven ſigns of good Trading, eſpecially in evil times; which men uſually reckon to be diſcoveries of a thriving Trade.

Firſt, When men go not back in the World, but hold their own, they loſe nothing: 'Tis much in bad times to keep ones ground; to be ſavers in ſuch a ſeaſon is a piece of gain: Try in this how 'tis with you; do not you go back in your ſpiritual eſtate? is it not worſe with you than heretofore? Is not your faith, love, humility, patience leſs than heretofore?

If

If you go not back in grace, you go forward; there's no ſtanding at a ſtay in Religion, men go forward or backward in the way of Vertue; they that do not decay, do thrive in Spirituals: *Job* proves his good eſtate by his ſtanding faſt in ſhaking times: *Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lip; I have eſteemed the words of his mouth more than my neceſſary food: My foot hath held his ſteps; his way have I kept, and not declined,* Job 23. 10, 11, 12. and thence concludes a gainful iſſue: *When he hath tryed me, I ſhall come forth as Gold.* And the Apoſtle reckons it good profit in ſoul-conflicts, to ſtand ones ground; if he cannot gain, yet not to loſe: *But having done all, to ſtand, is victory, Eph.* 6. 13. Chriſtians have their winter-ſeaſons, when growing is not viſible; then to keep alive, is commendable. Do you hold faſt your integrity, and keep your garments on? Do you preſerve your Conſcience pure from the defilements and temptations of the day and place you live in? and your hearts unſpotted from the World? your deſires as warm, your purpoſes of cleaving to God as firm, and your feet as quick to run the way of God's Commandments as heretofore? then have you good trading, conſidering the times you live in, which is an hour of temptation, and an evening of darkneſs.

Secondly, If Wares go off well, 'tis good trading; when goods vend at a good rate, men count it thriving. Is it ſo with your ſouls? do your prayers come up to God with acceptance? do duties turn to any profit to you? what returns

returns have you of your religious services? do hearing, prayer, conference, bring you any soul-advantage? do not goods lie by you undisposed of? but your graces are exercised, your talents, gifts, opportunities, improv'd; then 'tis good Trading. If the Lord give you light, you lay it out for the good of others; if he restore to you the joy of his salvation, and uphold you with his free Spirit, you teach transgressours his ways, and endeavour to convert Sinners to him, *Psal.* 51. 12, 13. When God drops in comfort to you, you pour it forth to others, that they may be comforted also with the same comforts wherewith you are comforted of God, 2 *Cor.* 1. 4. When you are come to duties publick or private, do graces go out in them? you shew parts it may be, but do you lay out grace as well as gifts, spiritual as well as natural affections? Do you pray with the Spirit, and hear with Faith? do hope, fear, humility, holy fervency, heavenly breathings, sincerity, go off in your religious duties? when you meet with company, what goods do you put off to them? Do you labour in every Society to vend something of heavenly wares, to put off some holy counsel and instruction, some gracious experience and observation, to leave something behind you in every place and company you come, that may fasten a savour of God on them? then is it good Trading, and you are in a Soul-thriving way.

Thirdly, Men count it good Trading, when they are richer in stock, when they have more goods, more variety, greater quantity of wares, than first they had, and that clear too, and paid for;

for; their shops and ware-houses are fuller than they were, and the goods their own also; this Men reckon good Trading: And can you say 'tis thus with your Souls also? Are you increased with spiritual goods? your graces are more as well as gifts, your faith, love, hope, fear, are more grown, and stronger than they were, 2 *Thes.* 1. 3. Can you trust God more than you could, and hang upon a naked promise more strongly than you could, when sight fails? 2 *Cor.* 5. 7. Can you think well of God when he frowns upon you? Can you love him when he corrects you? *Isa.* 39. 8. Can you stay on him when he strips you of your visible comforts, and cleave to him when he seems to reject you? *Job* 13. *v.* 15. Then are you richer in stock.

Is your Faith more cleansing and quickening, your Love more warming, your Zeal more fervent, your Hope more adventurous, your Patience more bearing, your Joy more delighting, your Humility more self-abasing? then are you encreased with goods. Have you more of every grace? it may be at first you had much affection, but little sincerity; great desires, but little faith; much comfort, but little patience and self-denial; you could pray, talk, rejoice, do some duties, but could not bear trials, want comforts, live by faith when sight failed; you were much it may be in some duties, but negligent in others; but now you have more variety of graces, enlargement in duties, and more universal respect to all God's commands, *Psal.* 119. 6. And if you are less in the bulk of duty, you are more in the spirit of it; when 'tis thus, there's

there's a thriving Trade in Christianity.

Fourthly, Are you less in debt than you were? that's another sign of good trading: Do you make Conscience of rendring to God again for all his benefits? *Psal.* 116. 12, 13. Is it your trouble when you are behind-hand with grace, and fall in arrear to the mercy of God by your unthankfulness? *Dan.* 9. 10. Indeed, in compensation of the grace of God you are defective, to make requitals of mercies you cannot; you see possibly an infinite shortness in your performances of the meanest favour that the Lord bestows upon you; but such as you have, you give to the Lord; you render all possible praises, though not all praises due, *Exod.* 15. 2. This you are careful of, and charge upon your hearts every day, to walk as becometh the grace that brings salvation, and the mercies bestowed on you: 'tis the desire of your heart and labour, to walk worthy of God to all well-pleasing, and to answer the end of mercy in which you are willing beyond your ability, and grieve at your falling short herein: Now this doth the Lord count for the deed, and accept at his peoples hands, as full pay, through the satisfaction of Jesus Christ, 2 *Cor.* 8. 12. And where 'tis thus that persons live in the daily sense of Divine Grace, and grateful acknowledgment of every mercy, there is a thriving Trade in Spirituals.

Fifthly, Have you much owed you, and is it secure? This also bespeaks a thriving Trade: Men count sure debts as good as ready money; though they have little in bags, yet if they have

the

the more in book, and good debt too, they rate themselves accordingly, and reckon themselves worth so much as is due, as well as to what is in hand: And is it so with you Christians? are you rich in promises? is much coming to you upon a new-covenant score? It may be you have little in hand, little comfort, peace and sweetness you meet with from day to day: You sow much, but reap little; you ask, but have not, and yet seek with your whole heart: Goods are received, but no money returned; if so; you have good grounds of hope for a plentiful harvest, because you sow store of good seed; are much in holy duties, and sincere in them; many a prayer upon the file, many a tear dropped into God's bottle: much grace laid out in duty, and time spent in it, a daily care to please God, and upon Scripture-grounds can lay claim to many a promise on the account of Christ: What you sow, you shall reap, *Gal.* 6. 8. *Your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord,* 2 *Cor.* 15. *v.* 58. *Say unto the righteous, it shall be well with them, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings, Isa.* 3. 10. And the less is received, the more is behind. Improvements of grace do book down many a mercy for Believers, which possibly they may not receive all their life, and yet be sure, and turns to account in the Inheritance prepared for them; and this is good Trading which brings in bonds and bills that are sure, and shall be paid to Heavenly Traders in their own Countrey.

Sixthly, That's good Trading where the present incomes maintain the Trader; and so much

is got by it as they may live by; when a person can live comfortably upon his gettings, without impairing the ſtock: If it be ſo with thee Believer in thy Heavenly Trade, then haſt thou good Trading. Try Chriſtians, your thriving by your livelihood! can you live comfortably upon the fruits of Religion, *Cant.* 2. 3. *Iſa.* 40. 31. doth your Religion maintain your Souls and Graces well? *Joh.* 4. 30. at what rate do you live? Men that thrive in the world uſually live well, have good fare, and good cloathing; Diet, Apparel, Expences, do ſoon ſhew mens gettings; Indeed Prodigals may ſpend high, live well for a time, but then they cannot hold it, they ſoon break; but when men can bear liberal expences, and their eſtates not impaired, it argues ſuch do thrive apace, and get well in their Trades; ſo 'tis with thriving Chriſtians, they ordinarily live at a higher rate of peace and comfort than others, *Pſ.* 119. 165. *Pſ.* 80. 19. their fare is better, unleſs the health of their Souls do ſometimes call to faſting and affliction; ſtrong Chriſtians, overcoming Souls, have better Proviſions promis'd them than others: ſuch feed on hidden Manna, *Rev.* 2. 17. and marrowy bits; milk is for babes, but ſtrong meat for ſtrong men, *Prov.* 21. 15. *'Tis joy to the juſt to do judgment: Joy and pleaſure* (ſaith *Mercer*) *is the fruit of wel-doing to ſuch*: (*h*) Such can expend more than others, who have larger proportion of Bleſſings on their Souls. A perſon may be truly gracious, and yet live uncomfortably in his Soul, and in the wayes of God;

(*h*) *Latitia obvenit ei ex juſtè factis ſuis.*

but

but he that thrives in Godliness, hath larger incomes of sweetness and peace, and makes many a merry meal on the review of his integrity, and the grace of God in and towards him, *Psal.* 112. 2.

Seventhly, Layings up, as well as layings out bespeaks good Trading, when men fill their bags and enlarge their possessions, turn Purchasers, and begin to join house to house, and field to field, then they manifestly shew their thrivings: So when Souls thrive in their Heavenly Trade, they begin to lay up for Heaven, and to be preparing for another world; they lay up Treasure in Heaven, *Mat.* 6. 21. get bags that wax not old: weak Christians are all for their comforts here, how they may maintain their peace and pleasure in the way; but strong Christians, thriving Souls, they have their thoughts upon their journeys end, and to make provisions for their future state: Bread and Water contents them here, *Gen.* 28. 20. a little spending Money in the way to help them home is all they intend for: But their chiefest care is to lay up for Heaven; *When shall I provide for mine own house, saith Jacob,* Gen. 30. 30. So the thriving Christian is thoughtful about his house in Heaven; to make all the provisions he can for that; he will lay up in store a good foundation to lay hold on eternal life, 1 *Tim.* 6. 19. he is for securing all he can for heaven, and for such works as will follow him; he will turn all he may into moveables, that he may transmit them into his Countrey. The interests of this world are stak'd down to the earth, and

cannot be removed; but thriving Christians are for such goods as they can knock up, and carry with them to their own home: They strive to pray, hear, think, speak, do, suffer, and all for eternity: their affections are gone before to Heaven, while their bodies are imprison'd in the World. As 'tis said of the *Athenians*, when besieged by *Sylla*, their hearts were with him without the walls, whiles their bodies were forc'd to serve within (*a*). So 'tis with enriched Christians; the World is a Prison to them, a strange Countrey where they have been sent to trade; and when they have fill'd their sacks, and got all they can, they long to depart into their own Countrey. By these things (Christians) may you know what kind of Trade you drive for Heaven; and what share you have in this great engagement to thansgiving.

Object. *All this makes against me, and confirms my just fears that I am a stranger to spiritual thrivings; I now see 'tis a pitiful Trade I drive in godliness: I profess, hear, pray, perform duties, enjoy priviledges, but am never the better. O how may I write lost labour on all my performances! I need no greater proof than these evidences; nor other judge than my own conscience, to convince my languishing soul of daily wastes and poverty in my heavenly Trade: What shall I do to get my case mended, and once attain to true thrivings in this holy Calling.*

(*a*) *Animos extra mœnia, corpora necessitati, servientes intra muros habuerint.* Paterc.

Sol.

Sol. There are four things which usually make men thriving in their earthly Trades; which do also contribute to prosperity in this heavenly Merchandise.

1 *A provident care.*
2 *A diligent hand.*
3 *A secret trade.*
4 *A divine blessing.*

First, Men that are thriving in the World are provident and careful to prevent their dangers, to secure their interests, and proportion means to their advantage. And so must Christians that think ever to flourish in godliness: what losses and miscarriages in Religion might a provident care prevent? were temptations way-laid, and corruptions timely guarded against, souls might escape many surprisals of sin, and abatements in grace: Never think to prosper in holiness, till you are provident to prevent its weaknings, and contribute all you may towards its strength and enlargement. One enjoys a good frame of soul, much peace and joy in believing; and for want of watchfulness loseth all again. Another hath got a little power over his corruptions for a time, and for want of a provident care to avoid ensnaring occasions, is overcome again. Another hath a choice advantage put into his hand for spiritual good, but not exercising a timely care and preparation to improve it, miscarries in all his hopes and labours; and by these changes and interruptions their spiritual welfare is impeded:

Go learn of the Ant, she provideth her meat in Summer, *Prov.* 6. 6. 8. Be wise as Serpents, they decline danger as soon as seen, and guard their noblest part, though with the hazard of their All, *Matth.* 19. 16. *Walk circumspectly as wise*, *Eph.* 5. 15. O how happy might Christians be, were they as provident for their souls as they are for their bodies! and did exercise their reason, care and fore-sight to further their spiritual interests; and without this Provident care, never think to prosper in this heavenly Merchandise. Take heed of grace-wasting sins, of any secret lust allowed, or sweet morsel rouled under your tongue, that will prove a moth in your spiritual estate, and keep you low in your heavenly interests. Souls under some perplexing lust, are like *Israel* under the prevailing hand of *Midian* against them, *Judg.* 6. 3, 4, 6. *When* Israel *had sown, the* Midianites *came up, and the* Amalekites, *and the children of the East, and they encamped against them, and destroyed the encrease of the earth, and left no sustenance for* Israel, *neither Sheep, nor Ox, nor Ass*;—*and* Israel *was greatly impoverished*: So 'tis with such; no sooner have they got any mercy, frame, experience, hope, or soul advantage, but presently a prevailing lust riseth up, and destroys all: Cry unto the Lord, as *Israel* did, until he deliver you from every iniquity: make no peace with any corruption, never let it rest till wholly destroyed, if you think to prosper in your souls and conversations. Be provident also to take all advantages for godliness, watching your opportunities for every duty, keeping every soul-

soul-market and fair, and taking the best season to lay out grace, and get in profit, *Prov.* 8. 34. Be careful to get some good from every thing, and to keep and save what you have; and this will tend to soul-thriving, *Acts* 2. 46.

Secondly, A diligent hand tends to thriving; men that prosper in the World take pains, and follow their employments; rising early, sitting up late, neglecting no business that may help on to profiting. So must you that intend to thrive in Religion; you must make it your business, you must be labourers in Gods Vineyard, *John* 6. 27. and workmen indeed that need not be ashamed, 2 *Tim.* 2. 15. Christians for the most part are too slothful in their spiritual business, to have their profiting appear: it will cost you more striving to enter into the strait-gate, and get ground in the narrow way that leads to life; more blows must pass before your enemies will down, and more strokes at your work before your interests will come in: Running, striving, wrestling; in labours more abundant, in weariness, and painfulness, in watching: What pains will men take for the World? *She riseth also while it is night,——Her candle goeth not out by night: That neither day nor night seeth sleep with his eyes. Ye compass Sea, and Land*; and should they not much more for heaven? The most diligent soul is the most thriving soul; *Always abounding in the work of the Lord*; Instant *in season, and out of season*; taking every opportunity for Heaven: *And what their hand finds to do, to do it with all their might*; this is the way to soul-thriving, 1 *Cor.* 9. 24, 25. *Heb.*

12. 4. *Eph.* 6. 12. 1 *Cor.* 11. 23, 27. *Prov.* 31. 15. 18. *Eccleſ.* 8. 16. *Matth.* 23. 15. *Eccleſ.* 9. 10.

Thirdly, Driving a ſecret Trade of holineſs is ſoul-thriving: Men that have ſome peculiar art, and unknown myſtery in their Trade which is not ordinary and common, uſually get greateſt cuſtom and advantage: So is it in this heavenly Trade; the more men are taken up in the myſteries of Godlineſs, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. the more they thrive in Religion. There's a ſecret in holineſs, which no ſtranger intermeddles with, *Prov.* 14. 10. There's a way within the veil; the hidden part in which ſouls are made to know wiſdom, *Pſal.* 51. 6. Hidden riches of ſecret places, which thriving Chriſtians meet with, *Iſa.* 45. 3. If you would proſper in Godlineſs, be ſure to maintain the ſecret duties of piety: The religion of moſt men lies in the Market-place, and in the view of others; their hearts, their cloſets are not privy to any ſecret tranſactions between God and their ſouls; and in the praiſe of men they have their reward: but the thriving trade of Chriſtianity, is the ſecret trade. Chriſtians be moſt in thoſe duties which men leaſt obſerve, and chiefly excellent in the inviſible part of your viſible work: Publick duties are moſt honourable, but ſecret duties the moſt gainful, *Matth.* 6. 4. *And thy Father which ſeeth in ſecret, ſhall reward thee openly.*

Fourthly, The bleſſing of God maketh rich: *Prov.* 10. 22. *Promotion cometh not from the Eaſt, nor from the Weſt*; nor proſperity from mens fingers ends, but from God's hand. *Deut.* 28. 8, 10.

8, 10, 11, 12. *The Lord shall command his blessing upon thee in thy Store-houses, and in all which thou settest thy hand unto:* ——*The Lord shall make thee plentious in Goods:* ——*The Lord shall open to thee his good Treasures; the Heavens to give thee rain to thy Land in his season, and to bless all the work of thy hand:* (and then comes Riches) *And thou shalt lend unto many Nations, and thou shalt not borrow:* Prosperity, both spiritual and temporal, comes at God's sending: Psal. 118. 25. *O Lord, I beseech thee, send now Prosperity:* Psal. 18. 32, 33. *He restoreth my Soul, he leadeth me in the Paths of Righteousness:* Psal. 23. 3, 5. *Thou anointest my Head with Oil: Thou blessest the springing thereof; thy Paths drop fatness:* Psal. 65. 10, 11. *The Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones; and thou shalt be like a watred Garden, and like a Spring of Water, whose Waters fail not,* Isa. 58. 11. *I will be as the Dew to* Israel, *he shall grow as the Lilly, and cast forth his Root as* Lebanon, *Hos.* 14. 5. Secure an interest in the promises, and get your souls brought under the showers of blessing, if ever you think to thrive in Godliness. Improve thriving Graces, and take prosperous courses; these are under a promise of blessing: though every grace and duty do in their measure help on soul-prosperity, yet there are some graces and duties have a more special influence on spiritual thrivings.

First, Faith is a soul-prospering grace: 2 *Chr.* 20. 20. *Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established: believe his Prophets, so shall ye*

prosper

prosper. Eph. 6. 16. *Above all take the shield of Faith, wherewith ye shall quench all the fiery darts of Satan,* ἐπὶ πᾶσιν, *insuper, Bez.* Every grace is useful in the spiritual warfare, but Faith especially: other graces may (with *Saul*) slay their thousands; but faith (with *David*) slays its ten thousands: Some darts may be quenched by other graces, but Faith quenches fiery darts, yea all the fiery darts of Satan, which does wonderfully further thriving: *The just shall live by faith, Heb.* 10. 38. Faith will maintain the soul's life in the greatest straits and exigences: Faith is a receiving grace, it takes in whatever is laid up in the promise; and that's thriving. *Gal.* 3. 22. *That the promise by Faith might be given to them that believe.* A soul-enriching grace, *rich in Faith,* Jam. 2. 5. A working grace, *And the work of faith with power,* 2 *Thes.* 2. 4. A powerful grace; it gives the soul experience of the mighty power of God. *Eph.* 1. 19, 20. *What is the exceeding greatness of his power to us ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead,* 1 *Thes.* 2. 13. 'Tis a strengthning grace: *Out of weakness were made strong, Heb.* 11. 34. through it doth the Lord let out his abundant grace: *And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus,* 1 *Tim.* 1. 14. It doth exceedingly nourish the soul in grace, and edifie it to salvation: 1 *Tim.* 4. 6. *Nourished up in the words of faith,* 1 *Tim.* 1. 4. *Which minister questions rather than edifying which is in faith:* One reason why souls prosper

prosper no more in piety is their Unbelief; they are full of doubtings, fears, and questionings upon every turn, still wavering as a wave of the Sea; such cannot receive much at the hand of God, but are still weak, and going back in Religion. Be much in believing the promises against hope, and above fears, if ever you think to prosper in Religion.

Secondly, Love to God, his Name, ways and interest is a Soul-prospering Grace. *Let them that love him, be as the Sun that goeth forth in his might*: Judg. 5. 31. *They shall prosper that love thee*, Psal. 122. 6. *Let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee, for thou Lord wilt bless the Righteous, with favour wilt thou compass him as with a Shield*, Psal. 5. 11, 12. Love to God must needs be a prospering Grace, because it brings the Soul under the blessing of God, and within the compass of his securing Shield. Love is a Soul strengthning and establishing Grace. *Eph.* 3. 17. *Being rooted and grounded in Love*, τεθεμελιωμένοι, set in a firm Ground, not easily shaken from God or their integrity. Love makes a growing Soul. *Eph.* 4. 15. *Speaking the truth in love, may grow up in him, who is the head in all things.* It helps on edification in Grace, *ver.* 16. *maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of it self in love*: Love constrains the Soul after God, makes his Commands pleasant, and quickens the heart to make haste in the way to Glory; the more you love God, the more will you prosper in Godliness.

Thirdly, Humility is a Soul-prospering Grace, and under a promised Blessing. *Prov.* 29. 23.

Honour

Honour ſhall uphold the humble in Spirit; (k) *ſhall bear him up from falling, and bring him unto honour* (ſaith *Montanus*) Prov. 15. 33. *By humility are Riches and honour*: The humble Soul muſt needs be a thriving Soul, for God giveth Grace to it, *Jam.* 4. 6. yea, dwelleth with the humble to revive the Spirit of the humble, *Iſa.* 57. 15. There's a great deal of Pride in moſt Chriſtians, and that hinders Soul-thriving, proud of Parts and Grace, proud under ſeeming humility, proud of humility; Low Valleys are fruitful, when lofty Mountains are barren: *The rich ſit in a low place*: Eccl. 10. 6. *Such as are rich in Wiſdom* (l) (ſaith *Mercer*) *they ſit in a low place*; they come down, and lie low in themſelves, (m) *folly is ſet in great dignity*: Poor, fooliſh, empty Creatures, they are high in conceit as well as place, many times: but the moſt rich and thriving Souls, theſe are pooreſt in Spirit, and loweſt in their own eyes; the richer the Metal the heavier; Gold weighs down Silver and Tin; the fuller of fruits branches are, the more they bow: *He ſendeth the Springs into the Valleys*, Pſal. 104. 10. Pſal. 65. 13. *They are covered over with Corn*: Vineyards thrive beſt in low places: One Branch of Grapes from the Valley of *Eſhcol*, was ſaid to be a burden for two men, *Numb.* 13. 23. would you flouriſh in Grace? take heed of Pride: *Pride in the Soul*, (ſaith one) *is like the Spleen in the Body, when that ſwelleth, all the other parts languiſh*: *'tis Poiſon at the Root of the Tree, which*

(k) *Suſtentat.* Munſt. יכמר גבור (l) *Divites quibus adſit ſapientia.* (m) *In ipſa abjectione.* Jun. Trem.

corrupts

corrupts the sap ——'Tis *so dangerous a Poison, that of another Poison there was confected a counterpoison to preserve.* Paul *from it:* would you prosper in Godliness? be persons of low, humble spirits, (Mr. *Adams* on 2 *Pet.* 2 *Cor.* 12. 7. *Exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high*, Ezek. 21. 26.

Fourthly, Another choice fruit of the Spirit which will further Soul thriving, is Sincerity: *Prov.* 14. 11. *The Tabernacle of the upright shall flourish: They shall have good things in possession*, Prov. 28. 10. they shall not only be preserv'd from evil, and escape the Pit into which the Wicked fall; but shall be sure to meet with good; Blessings, good things shall be given to them as their Inheritance, as *Aquila* and *Theodosius* interpret it, κληρονομήσουσι, *Thou shewest mercy to thy Servants, that walk before thee with all their heart*, 2 Chron. 6. 14. *He that hath clean hands and a pure heart, who hath not lift up his Soul to vanity, nor sworn deceitfully, he shall receive the Blessing from the Lord, and Righteousness from the God of his Salvation*, Psal. 24. 4. 5. Upright Souls must needs prosper, they dwell in the presence of God, *Psal.* 140. 13. He will withhold no good thing from them, *Psal.* 84. 11. His Countenance beholds them, *Psal.* 11. 7. God engages his allsufficiency for their good, *Gen.* 17. 1. They shall hold on their way, and wax stronger and stronger, *Job* 17. 9. and shall surely prosper. 2 *Chron.* 31. 21. *In every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the Law, and in the Commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered*:

'tis

'tis not thy many Duties before God, but the Oneneſs of thy heart with God: nor the bulk of thy Services, but the ſincerity of thy Soul, which will make thee proſperous in thy heavenly intereſts.

Again, Take thriving courſes, proſperous ways, as well as proſpering Graces, theſe are under a promiſed Bleſſing alſo. Not to multiply particulars: There are four thriving ways in which Chriſtians may attain to a proſperous Trade in Chriſtianity.

The way of
1. *Self-Examination.*
2. *Prayer.*
3. *Enjoyment of God.*
4. *Obedience.*

Firſt, Be often examining, and calling your ſelves to an account how matters ſtand with your Souls: Traders that would be thriving will be often viewing their Books, and trying their Accompts, and have ſome ſet days, when they ſurvey their Goods, caſt up their Books, and try whether they gain, or looſe; and ſo muſt Chriſtians that would profit in Religion, they muſt be often judging themſelves, that they be not judged, 1 *Cor.* 11. 31. they muſt caſt up their Accompts, and try their State whether they go forward or backward: *Hag.* 1. 5. *Conſider your ways*: try how the caſe ſtands with you, whether you get or loſe, and what's the cauſe of all thoſe blaſtings that are upon you, *Pſal.* 4. 4. *Commune with your hearts upon your Beds, and be ſtill*: 2 Cor. 13. 5. *Examine your ſelves whether*

you

you be in the Faith, prove your own selves; know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you except you be Reprobates. The neglect of this examination is one cause of that great mistake of persons about their Soul-state, some thinking themselves better, *Rev.* 3. 17. others judging themselves worse than they are: which begets security in some, discouragement in others, errour and sloth in all. A right estimate of thy spiritual capacity, either poverty or riches, gain or loss is absolutely needful to regulate thy duty unto a right affecting of thy heart, and advance of thy spiritual interests: Look over the Day-book of thy heart and life every night, posting all thy Accompts on the large Book of thy Conscience, and take some special time for a more full survey of thy Soul and State for Eternity; this will be of good use to further Soul-thriving.

Secondly, If you would prosper in your Souls, be much and mighty with God in Prayer: 'Tis said of *Uzziah*, that *he sought God in the days of* Zechariah, *who had understanding in the Visions of God, and as long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper*, 2 Chron. 26. 5. Right Prayer is a wonderful way to Soul-enrichings: *He* (saith one) *can never be poor that can pray well:* One reason why this King prospered as long as he sought the Lord, was, by this means he came to the *Visions of God*, and that help'd him to take a right way to prosperity. By Prayer you advise with God, what course to take towards mercy: 'tis your Ephod by which you ask Counsel of God where to go

to

to ſhun danger, and what to do to carry on Duty, and obtain Mercy, 2 *Sam.* 23. 6. 9. *Chap.* 30. 7. and by Prayer you procure and get out the Graces and Supplies you need, 1 *Chron.* 4. 10. *And* Jabeſh *called on the God of* Iſrael, *ſaying, O that thou wouldſt bleſs me indeed, and enlarge my Coaſts, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldeſt keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me:* and God granted him that he requeſted. Prayer brings down the Spirit, ſometimes inſenſible and almoſt intolerable meaſures thereof. When that precious Servant of the Lord Mr. *Bruce* in *Scotland* (of whom King *James* ſaid he was worthy of the half of his Kingdom) had ſadly repreſented the Churches Caſe, then under eminent danger, there was ſuch a ſenſible down-pouring of the Spirit, that they could hardly contain themſelves; yea, an unuſual motion on thoſe who were in other parts of the houſe, not knowing the cauſe of it at that time. O what great things did *Abraham*, *Jacob*, *Moſes*, *Jehoſhaphat*, *Samuel*, *Elijah*, and other Servants of God get out of the hand of God! *Luther* was a mighty man in Prayer, 'tis ſaid of him, he could get of God what he would, (*n*) nothing is too hard for Faith and Prayer, becauſe it ſeeks nothing but what God is willing to ſpare, and hath promiſed to give: Labour to get a mighty Spirit of Prayer; the Gift of Prayer will not do, it muſt be the Spirit of Prayer, which is a pure, and heart-cleanſing Spirit, and cannot dwell with the leaſt regarded Sin: Gifts of Prayer with na-

(*n*) *Ille vir potuit quod voluit.*

tural

tural affections may be mighty on the Spirits of men, but are no way prevailing with God for the Blessing: 'Tis said of *Naaman*, *he was a mighty man in valour, but he was a Leper*, 2 King 5. 1. So there are some that seem mighty men in Prayer and can wonderfully raise the affections of others; pray like Angels, but all the while are *Lepers*, under the ruling power of some secret lust; pride, passion, covetousness, uncleanness, and the like, which they hide under their Tongue; but such are far from this mighty power of Prayer, which brings down the Spirit on their own hearts or others. Ah Christians! if you would prosper in grace, get and improve the Spirit of Grace and Supplication.

Thirdly, Another thriving way is to engage God with you in all your undertakings. 'Twas this made *Joseph* so prosperous in all he did; God was with him. *Gen.* 39. 23. *Because the Lord was with him; and that which he did, he made it to prosper*: 2 Sam. 5. 10. *And* David *went on, and grew great, and the Lord God of Hosts was with him.* 'Twas not his Wisdom, Valour, nor any means he used, but the gracious presence of God with him that made him to grow so great: This made *Solomon* to prosper; 2 *Chron.* 22. 11. *Now my Son, the Lord be with thee, and prosper thee.* When persons lose the gracious presence of God, they soon find an alteration, and begin to wither and decay in their soul-comforts and prosperity: *Thou didst hide thy Face, and I was troubled, Psal.* 30. 6. Troubled like *a withered flower, that loseth sap and*

vigour, [Mr. *Leigh.*] *Jonah* soon found a change in his Soul; it ceased to be with him as before, when once he fled from the presence of God: He never had a good day after he lost the presence of God, but Storms, Tempests, Shipwrack of Peace, safety and prosperity, and a casting into the deeps of distress, and ruining dangers, *Jonah.* 1. 3, 10. Ah Christians! as you love your souls, and your spiritual welfare, take heed of losing God's gracious presence; whose company soever you lose, keep the Lord's presence with you; abide with him, and he will abide with you: 2 *Chron.* 15. 2. *The Lord is with you while you be with him; and if you seek him, he will be found of you: Put away the unclean thing, and he will dwell in you, and walk in you,* 2 *Cor.* 6. 16. Love him, and keep his commandments, and he will take up his abode with you, *Joh.* 14. 23. Content not you selves with any priviledge except you have God with you: *If thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence, Exod.* 33. 15. *I protest* (saith Mr. *Bruce*, when wrestling for the presence of God with him in his going to preach) *I will not go except thou go with me.*

Fourthly, Follow the counsel of God, if you would thrive in the work and way of God: *Josh.* 1. 8. *This book of the Law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein; for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success:* Jer. 38. 20. *Obey, I beseech thee, the voice of the Lord which I speak unto thee; so it shall be well unto thee, and thy soul*

shall

shall live. One cause why men prosper no more in Religion, is, that little conscience they make of doing the will of God: men hear, but forget the word; others know their Lord's will, but prepare not themselves to do it. We live in an age of notions, not of motion after God; like men that see Countries in a Map, but care not to travel into them; bare knowledge pleaseth most: Mens zeal after truth, is like *Absalom*'s love to his Father *David*, only to see him, not to serve him: 2 *Sam.* 14. 32. *Let me see the King's face*; which he no sooner did, but conspired against him: So most care for no more than to behold truth, not to dwell with it; and hence 'tis that prosperity is such a stranger to them: 'Twas not directions could heal *Naaman* of his leprosy, but obedience; he was never the better till he followed the Prophet's counsel, and washed in *Jordan*: that which made the ground rain'd upon, to be nigh to cursing, was not bringing forth fruit meet for them, by whom 'twas dressed, *Heb.* 6. 8. Do not only seek after, but walk after the truth, if you think to prosper in Religion, *Jam.* 1. 25. The doers of the word shall be blessed in their deed.

Object. *'Tis the desire of my soul to live in the exercise of every grace, and discharge of every duty; and some weak endeavours I have had, though too too short; with many cries for this soul-prosperity, but cannot yet attain unto it: Methinks I am like a wither'd arm, a dry tree, and barren womb, nothing doth me good; no food, seed or showers make me thriving and*

fruitful: I fear I shall be at last cut down, and bundled for the fire.

Sol. First, Thou mayest thrive in Religion, and not know it for a Season; thy profiting may be, though not appear: The Tradesman may bring home gain in his Purse, though untold: men know not their gettings till they cast up their Accounts: thy prosperity may be as a casked Jewel, and Friend under disguise. If you would estimate your advantage, survey your selves, compare your present with your former state; what were you? what are you? speak out soul: was there not a time when thou wert blind, thou couldest see no evil in sin, nor excellency in grace? but now thy eye is opened, and things appear otherwise to thy Soul than they did: Now there is nothing so vile as thy wicked heart, and waies; and nothing so desirable as Christ and holiness.

Thou wert once dead in sin, thou did'st not feel or fear any hurt in it, or danger by it; but now 'tis otherwise: thou canst not sin, but thy Conscience smites thee: nor God threaten, but it affrights thee: thy quick-ey'd Conscience soon espies the least failing in thy duty, falseness in thy heart, or errour in thy life; and, as a Serjeant arrests thee, and hales thee to the Judg. Thou could'st formerly live without God, and be as still as the dead body in the Grave, and the burning brand in the Fire: but now as a Bone out of joynt, thou art restless till in Communion with him: I remembred God and was troubled, *Psal.* 77. 3.

Thou

Thou wert gone out of the way; yea an Enemy to the way of life, turn'd aside to the flock of his Comapnion, and did'st turn again, and rend those that were of them. But now thou art folded with the flocks of Christ, and feedest besides the Shepherds Tents, *Cant.* 1. 8. Thy foot hath held his steps, and thou esteemest the word of his mouth more than thy necessary food, *Job* 23. 11, 12.

Object. *But may not an Hypocrite go so far, and all this be no more than a change from darkness to Conscience-light, and from Sin to Common Grace.*

Sol. Common light cannot see a desirableness in Christ for himself, nor bring the soul to count all things dross and dung to win him, and obtain the excellency of the knowledg of Christ as thy Lord; but saving light sees one Christ worth ten thousand Worlds, and quits all to take him, *Phil.* 3. 8.

Common light sees no evil in Sin; but Guilt, and Torment, loss of Comfort, and sense of Punishment, *Gen.* 4. 13. but true Grace, when in exercise, loaths Sin when it pretends Love; and flies from Sin when it makes largest proffers; and fears Sin when it sees no danger, when there is no breach on present comfort feeled, or danger of future misery feared, *Tit.* 2. 11. 12. The gracious soul, like *Joseph*, when tempted with flattery, secur'd with secresie, pursued with restless importunity to wickedness, yet cannot close with it, and sin against God, *Gen.* 39. 9. Com-

mon light can dwell with works of darkneſs, and conſiſt with an unſanctified heart and life, 2 *Pet.* 2, 1, 2. Common light and luſt never fall out but when it awakens conſcience, or weakens intereſts: but ſaving grace cannot beat that which is evil, *Rev.* 2. 2. or ever be brought to a treaty with ſin, in order to an agreement, *Gal.* 5. 17. but, with *Sarah*, can never be at reſt till the bond-woman and her ſon be turn'd out of door, *Gen.* 21. 10. common grace may be offended at ſin, but never hates ſin; there is no contrariety founded in their nature or difference, but what may upon terms be made up, *Luke* 23. 12. And if it ſeems to have an indignation againſt ſin, yet 'tis not againſt every ſin, and at all times, nor irreconcilable at any time: but ſaving grace hates the very being of ſin, 2 *Cor.* 7. 11. And as the Tyger flies at the very picture of a man, ſo doth Grace abhor the appearance of evil: 'Tis univerſal againſt the whole ſpecies, and every kind of ſin; an enmity founded in the nature of grace, and therefore irreconcilable, *Pſal.* 139. 22. and derived from the riches of grace, *Pſ.* 97. 10. and greatneſs of redemption-love: It cannot be reconciled to ſin, becauſe ſin cannot be reconciled to grace, or admit of any love to, or enjoyment of God; but ſtill interrupts the ſoul's tranquility, holineſs and pleaſure in God, his chiefeſt and only good.

Again, Common light can live without ſpecial acquaintance with God, *Eph.* 2. 13. [afar off,] if it can have peace, becauſe its Countrey is nouriſhed by the Kings Countrey, *Act.* 12. 20.

and

and its welfare depends upon divine pleasure, 'tis all it looks for: but saving grace gets within the veil, *Heb.* 6. 19. approaches the mercy-seat, where it converses with God. To be called by his name will not content grace; no, nor to eat his bread, and wear his rayment, except it enjoys his bed also: it longs for intimate communion with God, *Psal.* 101. 2. *O, when wilt thou come unto me?* It loves the Bride-chamber, closet, and secret corners with him; never thinking it self near enough to, or long enough with him.

Obj. *But change from nature to grace, is not growth in grace: though I may have received the former rain, and reaped the first fruits of the Spirit; yet I fear I have not the latter rain, and after fruits of grace: waterings and dressings do not make me fruitful, or feedings make me grow: and that's the case you insist on.*

Sol. 1. There may be fruit, though not appearing; and growth, though unseen: Christ hath under-ground-fruit, which many not spring up to thy own view, or others, *Ps.* 88. 5. [*Free among the dead,*] as berries hid among the leaves, which cannot be seen till winter-storms or shaking times come: thou mayest thrive more inwardly than outwardly, and be like the windows of the Temple, wide within, and narrow without; you may grow more in the truth and parts of grace, though less in the fruits of grace for a season; thy sincerity may be more, though thy shews be less; you may grow more down-

ward in humility, self-abasement, sorrow for sin, though not upward in joys and blossoms of comfort; thou mayest grow more out of thy self, and into Christ as the root of all thy grace, and foundation of thy soul-rest, though not into sensible frames and workings of grace. Art thou more sensible of thy own nothingness? thy heart-deceitfulness? self-sufficiency? inward disorders? soul-wants? sinfulness? hypocrisie? barrenness? then thou profitest, *Rom.* 7. 18. Art thou more jealous of thy heart every day, 2 *Cor.* 9. 27? more weary of thy self? and longing after Christ? having a higher valuation of his excellency, and greater breathings after his quickning spirit, and delighting presence, *Phil.* 3. 8? this is profiting.

Secondly, It may be thy conclusion springs from thy impatiency; thou mayest be for hasty fruit, not allowing time for its growth and maturity. The Husbandman waits for the precious fruits of the Earth, *Jam.* 5. 7. before he can enjoy them, or estimate their worth: Thy hopes, labours and profit may be buried under the Clods for a while: *We cannot sow and reap* (saith one) *in a day*: The more excellent and durable the fruit is, the longer is it before it comes to maturity; rare ripe Fruits are soon rotten: Hypocrites blossom a-pace, and cast their Leaves as fast, *Mat.* 13. 21. Though 'tis matter of shame, that those Trees which have less Earth, and least nourishment, should grow fastest, yet the reason is, they take up no time in getting root, and growing downward; and hence all their growth is outward.

Third-

Thirdly, It may be 'tis a Winter time with thy soul; the Sun of Righteousness is withdrawn from thee, and thy lightsome days are gone, *Cant.* 2. 11, 12. The Comforter that should have relieved thy soul, is far from thee, *Lam.* 1. 16. It may be thou hast sinn'd away his warming presence, and lost thy first spring; hence 'tis the flowers do not appear: Yet here's thy comfort, though thy Winter be not a time of fruit, yet God will make it to thee a time toward fruitfulness.

Advice 2.

2. You that have any good Trading for Heaven, be exhorted to enlarge your Trade; drive a greater Trade of godliness every day, as men that prosper in the World do; they build larger Barns, fairer Houses, greater Shops, get more Goods, buy more Land, and widen the bounds of their interests: So should you Christians, if God bless your heavenly substance, and prosper your souls; if the gain of godliness come in, lay it out to greaten godliness, as biting Usurers do, take use upon use; convert your gettings into your Trade; put your incomes into bank, and your blessings into stock, trading on them. Think

First, on the smalness of thy first stock, and thy low estate at thy setting up, A *Syrian* ready to perish, *Deut.* 26. 5. thy grace was small, a grain of Mustardseed, *Mat.* 13. 31. thy capacity is weak, a new-born Babe, 1 *Pet.* 2. 3. You began with one Talent, and have you not reason to improve it? you were the fewest of all

people

people, *Deut.* 7. 7. *I taught Ephraim also to go, taking him by the arm, Hos.* 11. 3. as a little weak child; *a dry tree, Psal.* 56. 3. *a tender plant, Isa.* 53. 2. which need addition.

Secondly, Consider what a poor Trade most men drive for Heaven this day; few that seek the things that are Christ's, and make Religion their business. All men seek their own things; the multitude of Professours, as well as others, wonder after this beast the World: We may say of Religion, as the Prophet did of *Sion: This is godliness which no man seeketh after, Jer.* 30. 17 Few *Israelites, in whom there is no guile*; few *Noahs, perfect in their generation, walking with God*; few *Calebs, who fulfill after God.* Most mens Religion lies in notion, profession, talkings, frames, priviledges, going to Meetings, getting into Churches; but few make conscience of their words and waies, their promises and duties; few second-table men and women, that cause their light to shine before men; and as *Zachary* and *Elizabeth, walking in all the commands and ordinances of God blameless, Luke* 1. 6. *doing justly, shewing mercy, and walking humbly with their God, Mich.* 6. 8. *visiting the fatherless and widow in their affliction, and keeping themselves unspotted from the world, Jam.* 1. 27. And should not this provoke thy zeal for the Lord of Hosts, to see the Altars of Religion down, and so few friends of godliness left, and stir up thy holy ambition to excel and do more for God than others? It would argue a brave spirit, and be a worthy attempt to offer a lift at fal'n godliness, with thy *life* as well as *lip*, and by the raised

raised splendour of thy holy conversation, as a City on a hill, to provoke others to an imitation, saying, *Come up hither.*

Think also what an excellent Trade the Saints and Angels in Heaven drive, who have their portion in hand, and dwell in the City of the great King, who are alwaies receiving and rendering, driving a whole Trade for God, above all hazards and interruptions: They alway behold their Father's face, and serve him day and night in his Temple, with palms in their hands, with songs in their mouths, and their Crowns at his feet, and how far you are beneath these glorious Merchants. Think what a breadth you have yet to fill up in godliness, and what advances you must make in holiness, before you can get up to their pitch, and have a place amongst them that stand by, *Zach.* 3.7. and is it not time yet to build the house of God? *Hag.* 1. 2. and that you hasten to your work, and raise higher stories for God every day, pressing after greater measures of grace, till you come to the fulness of the stature of Christ, and those perfections of glorified Saints and Angels?

Fourthly, When will you be fit for a return into your own Countrey, and a comfortable account of your Stewardship, if you be so slothful and contracted in your Heavenly Trade? when will your ships be loaden, and your sacks full for a departure hence, if you trade at such a rate, and attend your soul-thrivings no better? your Treasure is deep, and calls for more digging; your Crown is afar off, and requires faster running; your Reward is large, greater enlarge-

ments

ments of labours are needful to meeten you for it. O think how far glory is above all your proportions of grace and duty; and what need you have to preſs after more enlargedneſs in your ſouls, and ſuitableneſs for your eſtate above.

Fifthly, The greater Trade you drive for Heaven, the leſs trouble; 'tis not ſo in earthly Trades; there the more work, the more wearineſs; but Religion carries refreſhment in its work. *John* 4. 34. *My meat is to do the will of him that ſent me, and to finiſh his work.* *Prov.* 3. 17. *Her waies are waies of pleaſantneſs, and all her paths are peace.* O thee ſweetneſs and delicate pleaſure which vigorous purſuits of holineſs afford! *Cant.* 2. 3. *I ſate under his ſhadow with great delight, and his fruit was ſweet to my taſte.* If perſons intermeddle not with the joy of godlineſs, 'tis becauſe they neglect the work of it; they eat not the Kernel, becauſe they break not the Shell; Chriſt's myrrh is to be gathered, and his Honey eaten with the honey-comb, which muſt be ſqueezed out ere eaten, *Cant.* 5. 1. *Rabbi Solomon* takes the Comb עץ, for a Cane, (*n*) out of which the Honey is ſucked, or the Sugar boyled out. They that will eat Chriſt's pleaſant bread, muſt work hard for it; his Idlers have none of his dainties; the greater the labour, the ſweeter is the reſt. The Lord's way is not tireſom, unleſs to fleſh and blood: the more you run in it, the leſs weary. *Iſa.* 40. 31. *They ſhall run, but not be weary, walk, but not faint*: And though they ſhould be weary in

(*n*) Pro canna in qua ſit mel quod exugatur abjecta canna. Mercer.

well

well doing, through their carnal sloth, yet they are not weary of it.

Sixthly, The greater Trade, the richer; 'tis not always so in worldly employments; men may labour in vain, and sit down in sorrow, but godliness is profitable for all things, *Isa.* 55. 2. 1 *Tim.* 4. 8. And the heavenly Trade brings in the true Treasure, as I have already shewn; and the more employment the more profit.

Seventhly, The larger Trade you drive for Heaven, the more you have of that honour that comes down from Heaven, *Rom.* 2. 10. *Glory and honour, and peace to every one that worketh good.* The greater Trade, the greater Riches, and the greater Riches the greater Reputation: *The rich hath many Friends*, Prov. 14. 20. The greater Trade you drive for Heaven, the greater regard you have from God; the more of his presence is with you, his delight in you, and blessing upon you; the Spouses growth and fruitfulness, was much taking upon the heart of Christ. *How fair and how pleasant art thou, O Love for delights! Cant.* 7. 6, 7. *This thy stature is like to a Palm-tree, and thy Breasts to Clusters of Grapes.* The Palm-tree is an emblem of growth and fruitfulness; the more it is oppress't, the more it grows, and no Tree more fruitful; 'tis called ἀειφυλλος, alway having leaves: Naturalists say, 'tis never without leaves and fruit; when some fruit is ripe (as *Pliny* tells us) other fruit is growing. It hath Leaves in the highest Branches, wherever the sweet sap comes (saith *Alsted*) Tis a Tree that's exceeding profitable; some reckon three hundred and sixty advantages that

that this Palm-tree yields, (o) and hence the *Egyptians* make it a ſymbole of the Solar year, which conſiſts of three hundred ſixty five daies: and its fruit is wonderfully reſtorative and nouriſhing, repairing the decayed ſtrength, and radical moiſture of man's body, *Alſted. Theol. Nat.* and therefore a fit metaphor to expreſs the Churches fruitfulneſs, in which the Lord Jeſus takes ſuch great delight; he gets up early to the Vineyard, to ſee if the Vine flouriſh, whether the tender grape appear, and the Pomegranate bud forth, *Cant.* 7. 12. So delightful is the view of a flouriſhing people unto Chriſt: The more you thrive in grace, the more will you have of Chriſts company; and that's honourable.

Eighthly, The greater Trade you drive for Heaven, the more uſeful you are while on Earth; the larger capacities you have to do good to others, and to ſerve your generation, which is a bleſſed thing: *'Tis more bleſſed to give than to receive, Acts* 20. 35. 1 *Tim.* 6. 17, 18. *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they do good, that they be rich in good works, that they be ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate.* The richer you are in grace, the more able you are to do good, and not only able, but the more willing alſo. The reaſon Chriſtians have no more heart to do good, and to communicate, is their ſoul-poverty; they are not rich in grace, they have but little ſpiritual Treaſure, little grace to communicate; their hands are ſhut, becauſe their hearts are empty; but the more divine trea-

(o) *In fructuum jam maturorum locum alii fructus eodem in loco & eadem parte ſtatim ſuccedunt.* Plin

ſure

sure you have, the more ready will you be to do good, and to lay out both your outward and inward riches. O how useful may rich men be in the places where they live, if God give them hearts to do it! and how helpful may such be in this day of soul-wants, who are encreased with spiritual goods? there are many impoverished souls this day who are ready to perish for want of light, peace and comfort, perplexed with doubts, darkness, and distressing fears, and have none to help them. O how refreshing, in such a day of soul-exigences, would it be to have some rich neighbours among them, some prosperous Jobs! *Who with-hold not the poor from their desire, nor cause the eyes of the Widow to fail,* Job. 31. 16, 17, 19. *Who would draw forth their soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul,* Isa. 58. 10. *Who could not eat their morsel alone, or see the poor to perish for want of cloathing: To be eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame,* Job 29. 15. *To speak a word in season to him that is weary, and to comfort others with the same comforts they have received of God.* Christians, make haste to be rich in grace, that ye may be rich in good works; that ye may cast in much into the Lord's treasury, *Mark* 12. 41. and out of your abundance cast into the offerings of God, *Luke* 21. 4. Then should the blessing of the poor, that was ready to perish come upon you, *Job* 29. 13. and the fruit of well-doing be your savoury meat, on which the Lord would daily feed you.

Ninthly, The greater Trade you drive for Heaven now, the greater will your estate in Heaven

Heaven be hereafter: 2 *Tim.* 4. 8. *Henceforth is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness; which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me at that day; and not to me only, but to all that love his appearing.* To me, who have run my Race, finish'd my Course, and kept the Faith: To me, who have wrought hard in the Vineyard, and traded diligently for Heaven in the World: For me, yea for all such as enlarge their Heavenly Trade, is laid up ἀπόκειται, (as Parents do Portions for their Children, saith *Zanchy*) *a Crown of Righteousness*: glory sutable to their improvments of grace; called *a Crown* to note its excellency; and *of Righteousness*, to note its equity: It shall bear a proportion to all that grace, labours and faithfulness that is in Saints; and infinitely beyond it. *A far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory*, 2 *Cor.* 4. 17. God will not leave out the least item of the Saints right in the great day of Righteousness; *A Cup of cold Water; a little Meal to the Prophet* Elisha; *a mite in the Treasury; a desire to build God's house*: all shall be remembred in that day: Mercy gives the Crown, but Justice fits it for the overcomer's head. *God crowns* (saith *Beda*) (p) *his own gifts, not thy mercies: He first gives grace in the time of mercy, and then crowns it in the day of Judgment:* And is not this argument enough? yea constraint on an ingenious heart, to labour after the greatest latitude of holiness? Is not Heaven enough to requite all thy duties and

(p) *Dona sua coronat non merita tua. Donavit hac tempore misericordiæ, coronabit illa tempore judicii.* Beda *in loc.*

hard-

hardships on Earth? *What's enough*, (saith one) *if* Rome *be counted little*? (q) So what can be counted great, if Heaven be small, and not price enough for all thy holy strivings, and utmost progress in the way of life?

O attend your proficiency in this heavenly Trade! your hearts and hands can never be too deep in the concerns of this upper world; in this you can never be too covetous: 1 *Cor.* 12. 31. *Covet earnestly the best Gifts*, (r) Take heed of putting stands and limits to your holiness: (the course of all unsanctified souls: In this only is it lawful to remove the ancient bounds, and enlarge your spiritual inheritance, as far as possible; *Reaching forth to the things that are before, and pressing forward to the mark for the price of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus*, *Phil.* 2. 13, 14. Nothing undoes Professors like to stinting their measures of holiness, and contenting themselves with present attainments; if they can get to such a pitch of Light, Grace, and Comfort, as will secure their salvation and present welfare, they sit down, and go no further: this makes formalists and starvelings in Religion: *Speak unto the Children of* Israel *that they go forward*, *Exod.* 14. 15. is God's charge on his people in their passage to the heavenly *Canaan*: *Be adding to your Faith Vertue*, *&c*, 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. The greatest skill in this holy Arithmetick lies in Addition and Multiplication. Be still enlarging your store, get in more choice of Heavenly Wares, greater quan-

(q) *Quid satis est si Roma parum.* (r) Ζηλοῦτε, *modis omnibus studio, precibus consequi annitimi.*

tities, and more coſtly Goods and be putting off more and more Goods, as you have opportunity; ſeeing great is not only your preſent advantage, but your reward in Heaven alſo, *Mat.* 5. 12.

Advice 3.

Thirdly, You that have good times for Trading now, make Proviſion for bad times; Lay in for changes: be not like the Graſhopper, that ſpends her All in Summer, and when the Winter comes, ſtarves. Every Summer hath its Winter; North-winds have their ſeaſon to blow on Chriſt's Garden, as well as the South, *Cant.* 4. 16. Good and evil have their turns with Chriſtians in this life: 'Tis only the *Diveſes* that have their good things in this life; here have the Saints no continuing City, *Heb.* 13. 4. Created Comforts, whether ſpiritual or carnal, have their ſhakings and removes: Heb. 12. 27. *And this word yet once more ſignifies the removing of thoſe things that are ſhaken, as of things that are made; that thoſe things which cannot be ſhaken, may remain.* The life of Believers is made up of viciſſitudes; with *Naomi*, now full, then empty, *Ruth* 1. 21. like Ships in their paſſage to their Port, now they have calms, then ſtorms; none but wicked, and they not always neither, are exempted from their changes in this life, *Pſal.* 55. 19. 'Twas an errour in *David*'s apprehenſions, which he ſoon ſaw to his coſt, that his mountain was made ſo ſtrong, it ſhould not be moved. *Pſal.* 30. 6. *I ſaid, in my proſperity, I ſhall never be moved: Lord, by thy favour, thou haſt made my mountain to ſtand ſtrong; thou did'ſt*

did'st hide thy Face, and I was troubled. Prosperity and Affliction have their different *saies* and *thoughts*: Think of thy most promising state here; *though this be a beautiful structure, yet 'tis but a Tabernacle*: Sin puts wheels on every condition below, and makes them moveable: What that Ambassador said to the *Romans*, who boasted of the heighth and strength of their Walls; *they were not so high, but sin could bring them down*, may be said of the most flourishing condition of Saints in this World: Is thy store full now? a spending time may come: *Dionysius the second had four hundred Ships, an Army of one hundred thousand foot, nine thousand horse, and the richest Magazine of any Prince, and yet lived to lose all.* Christians have their spending as well as getting times, and should lay in for times of need.

There are four special seasons when gracious souls will have need of all their store to relieve them.

Times of { *Temptation.* / *Desertion.* / *Affliction.* } And

The time of *Death.*

First, Times of Temptation are spending times, and call for great succours to be laid in against such seasons. First, Because such times are certain to Believers, they will come. *Psal.* 11. 5. *The Lord tryeth the righteous*: There's never a gracious Soul, but some time or other the Lord tryeth it, either immediately by his Spirit, or mediately by Afflictions or Temptations from men or devils. The Apostle tells us, every

man is tempted. *James* 1. 14. *But every man is tempted when he is drawn aside of his own lust and enticed. The best of men* (saith one) *are tempted, and that when they are at the best.* [*Capell of Temptation.*] *Adam* in Paradise, *Gen.* 3.6. *Solomon* after God had twice appeared to him, 1 *King* 11. 9. *Job* after the Evidences of his Uprightness before God, and Religious Duties, *Job* 1. 1, 5. *Peter* after he had made a confession of Christ, and entered into Covenant never to be offended at him, *Mat.* 26. 33. Yea Christ himself after his Baptism, and the Spirit's resting on him as a Dove, and the Father's owning of him by an audible voice from heaven, *Matth.* 3. 17. *chap.* 4. 1. *He* (saith the former Author) *that thinks he is so good that he ought not to be tempted, and so strong, that he need not fear to be tempted, hath need of a temptation, that by experience in himself, he might prove what he ought to have found in the World; that of our selves we have no strength.* Capell.

Four things make temptations unavoidable to gracious souls:

1. *God's good pleasure.*
2. *Satan's Rage.*
3. *The Saints Corruption.*
4. *And their Profit.*

First, 'Tis God's good pleasure to have them tryed: *The fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is,* 1 *Cor.* 3. 13. whether it will bear the fire or no; hereby the excellency of his work, the greatness of his power appears, in the enduring graces of the Saints, and their standing after all. By this the Lord will confute the slanders

ſlanders of men and devils, who are ſtill charging his people with hypocriſie, and falling away when tryal comes; *Doth* Job *fear God for nought? Job* 1. 9. *Put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and fleſh, and he will curſe thee to thy Face, Job* 2. 5. This is the uſual calumny of the Saints Enemies; to confute which, and prove them lyars, doth the Lord ſuffer his people to be tempted. 'Tis his will and purpoſe that all his people ſhould be tryed; and therefore 'tis unavoidable.

Secondly, Such is Satan's rage, he cannot alwaies keep his Fingers from them; if he lets them alone, 'tis but for a ſeaſon. *Luke* 4. 13. *When the Devil had ended all the temptations, he departed from him for a Seaſon.* Is Satan buſie? then his work is not done; haſt thou any reſt; 'tis becauſe his tempting time is not come: he is a roaring Lyon, and cannot reſt from ſeeking to devour, though he forbears attempting to devour for a ſeaſon, when it makes to his greater advantage: Never expect freedom from temptation, till Satan's chain be ſhortened, or thy remove without his reach obtained, *Rev.* 20. 2, 3.

Thirdly, The Saints corruptions expoſe them to temptations; *Where the Carkaſs is, there the Eagles reſort, Mat.* 24. 28. While the Saints have gall'd backs they can expect no freedom from flies. If *Sampſon* be bound, the *Philiſtines* will be upon him. *The cauſe of thoſe Sins is in us whereof the occaſion is from Satan,* Capell. Till the fire of Hell be out in the Saints, the Devil will not lay down his Bellows; where there is no

ſin, there is no matter of Temptation to work on; as where there is no morbid matter, there contagion cannot ſo eaſily faſten, corruption keeps open the door for Satan; never look for ſilence from Satan, till you find ceſſation from ſin.

Fourthly, The profit, and good of gracious ſouls do neceſſitate it: By this means they come to ſee their own vileneſs; were it not for Temptation, they could not ſee the greatneſs of their corruption: *David*, *Solomon*, *Hezekiah*, *Peter*, did not think their heart was ſo abominable, till left to temptation, which ſtirs the mud, and brings up the bottom to the top; and this helps to abaſe them, and make them more vile in their own eyes. By this alſo they ſee their own weakneſs, and their need of Chriſt; and are more effectually brought out of themſelves to the Lord Jeſus for ſuccour and victory. And by Temptations from Satan they come to be acquainted with his Devices, 2 *Cor.* 2. 11. and more skill'd in his Wiles and Stratagems (no ſmall advantage to one that is in a ſtate of warfare with him.) This way alſo doth the Lord winnow his Saints, and by theſe high Winds fan and cleanſe them. *Luke* 22. 31. *Satan hath deſired to have you, that he may ſift you as Wheat*; and brings them to more conformity to their head, and to greater eſtabliſhment in grace, which are glorious advantages to Believers, promiſed in the New Covenant, and this way accompliſh'd, which makes Temptations neceſſary to Wiſdom's Merchants, and renders it their great concern to lay in proviſion againſt them.

Secondly,

Secondly, As Temptations are certain, and will come; ſo they are ſhaking when they come; they are part of that rain, flood and wind which did beat vehemently on the ſandy building, that it fell, *Mat.* 7. 27. *Luke* 6. 49. Temptations are part of the Devil's Artillery, his fiery Darts and cruel Buffetings which none can bear without the whole Armour of God upon him; and then too, all they can do is but to ſtand, *Epheſ.* 6. *v.* 13, 16. They are ſo potent and prevailing, as that none but ſuch as are in Chriſt can ſtand their ground under them. *And in time of Temptation fall away, Luke* 8. 13. Receive the Word with joy, ſeem to love God, and delight in his waies for a Seaſon, till Temptations come to the purpoſe, and then fall away. There are ſome Temptations are more eaſie to be born, but when Satan ſets on a Soul with all his might, there's no ſtanding without divine ſuccour, and the Lord's opening a way to eſcape. Temptation is reckoned amongſt the ſoreſt afflictions that the Saints do undergo, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. *Heb.* 2. 18. *Heb.* 11. 37. *They were ſtoned, they were ſawn aſunder, they were tempted, they were ſlain with the ſword.* No ſuffering like temptations, for they draw the ſoul to ſin, which is more cruel than death to a Soul that loves Chriſt. O Chriſtians, what need have we then to be laying in for an hour of Temptation, ſeeing it will ſurely come, and ſeeing it will be ſo terrible when it comes!

Get your ſelves well-furniſh'd with Wiſdom, that you may know Satan's Devices, that you may be able to diſtinguiſh between Temptation

and corruption, and able to anſwer the Objections, and ſubtle reaſonings of Satan; you muſt have experience alſo to encourage your hope, and ſtrengthen your patience, that inſtances of former relief in the like caſes may lift up your head, and ſtrengthen your expectations in new Tryals alſo. You muſt lay in ſtore of Faith to guard your hearts, and ſhield your heads from the fiery darts of Satan; you muſt get your integrity cleared, and the uprightneſs of your heart and way evidenced; that's of great uſe alſo to bear up your Spirit under all his charges againſt you. Make much of every breathing of his Spirit in you, and take care you quench not any of his motions: *God* (ſaith one) *doth often leave us to own Satan's ſuggeſtions for our own, becauſe we do not own God in his holy motions and breathings.* And have good Evidences of your intereſt in Chriſt, and aſſurance of his love to you, and aſſured help in the time of need; taking ſpecial care to have Corruptions weakened, and a growing mortification in your ſouls; that ſo when Satan comes he may find nothing in you to faſten his temptations on: This calls for your provident care, to ſtore your ſouls againſt times of Tryal.

Secondly, Times of deſertion are ſpending-times, which will need a full ſtock, when the Lord doth hide his face, and withdraw the ſenſe of his love, and influence of his quickening preſence: This the Lord may do, and hath done; he hath left the dearly beloved of his ſoul; gone from his habitation; compaſt himſelf about with a cloud; left his Children in darkneſs as thoſe

that

that have been long dead. *'Tis just with God* (saith Mr. *Cooper*) *to deny us the comfort of our graces, when we deny him the glory of them. Isa.* 45. 15. *Verily thou art a God that hidest thy self, O God of Israel the Saviour. Job* 23. 8, 9. *Behold I go forward, but he is not there, and backward but cannot perceive him, on the left hand where he doth work, but I cannot behold him; he hideth himself on the right hand that I cannot see him. Isa.* 49. 14. *But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, my God hath forgotten me.* This was one of the greatest sufferings on Christ, his apprehensions of his Father's forsaking him, *O God my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Mat.* 27. 46. Here was a total and final desertion that our Lord Jesus came under as to his sense, and the effects of it; he saw nothing of the comforts of the Divine presence, to the last breath of life, but died in this darkness. *Verse* 50. *Jesus when he had cryed again with a loud voice* (that is, as he had done, *verse* 46.) *he gave up the Ghost*; and had no comfort to the last minute of life: And if God hath done so to the green tree how much more may he to the dry? if he forsake his natural and onely beloved Son, he may surely hide himself from his Adopted Sons, even to their dying hour: And this is a condition full of consternation and terrour: The *Pœna damni*, the loss of God, and all good, is thought to be a far greater punishment to the damned, than all the punishment of sense and torment. O the dreadful apprehensions that good souls have had about God's forsaking them! 'Tis a Hell on Earth, and the beginning of the second death,

to

to be under a real sense of God's removal from the Soul. O the amazing dread, and consuming terrour, that *Job*, *Asaph*, *Heman*, and others were fill'd with, by such apprehensions of Gods withdrawment from them, and his wrath lying hard upon them! Soul, though now it be a time of light with thee, the Candle of the Lord shines upon thee; thou walkest in the light of his countenance, lyest in his bosom, and art dandled on his knee; yet may the days of darkness be many, and thy soul lie in the shadow of death, and under real apprehensions of the Lord's departure from thee, and displeasure against thee, and then thou wilt find need of all the cordials, light and hope imaginable. O lay in sure and unquestionable satisfaction about this great case; that God is really and inseparably yours; and under all your clouds, fears and guilt, think well of God. *'Tis hard* (saith one) *to think ill of our selves, and well of God at the same time.* Store your selves with promises and experiences, with faith, hope, patience, and every grace that may bear you up in such a Tryal, and cordial your fainting heart under such dangerous deliquiums. *If God should damne me* (saith one) *I have two arms, the one of faith, and the other of love, with which I would embrace him, and carry him with me, and his presence would make Hell it self a Heaven to me.*

Thirdly, Times of sore affliction, and distressing calamities, are spending-times, and will try your store of grace, and strength to bear it, and to get through it; and such you may live to see: The Cross is the usual way to the Crown, and

and affliction the lot of them that will live godly in Christ Jesus. *And we must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God*, Act. 14. 22. *The fining-pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold*, Prov. 17. 3. And the fan for the wheat; the condition of Believers in this world cannot long bear prosperity without loss to their spiritual part. Christians under settled comforts in this world, are like standing pools which soon gather mud; and as 'tis said of *Moab*, so 'tis with the people of God. *Jer.* 48. 11. *Moab hath been at ease from his youth, and he hath settled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity, therefore his taste remained in him, and his scent is not changed. The sweetest nights that ever* Jacob *spent were in the field; so with* Peter *in prison; and* David *had those large affections to rise at midnight, and God's Word was sweet to him when his trouble was bitter*, saith Dr. *Harris*. But by afflictions the Lord refines his people from their dross. *Though the wisdom of the World* (saith Mr. *Bradford*) *think of the cross according to sense, and therefore flieth from it, as from a most great ignominy and shame; yet God's scholars have learned to think otherwise of the Cross, as the frame-house wherein God frameth his children, like to his Son Christ: the furnace that fineth God's gold, the high way to Heaven, the suit and livery of God's servants, the earnest and beginning of all consolation and glory. Acts & Mon. 3. Vol. page 322.* If you will be Christ's Disciple, you must expect tribulation; *If need be you are in heavines for a season.* God's fire is in *Sion*, and his furnace in

Jern-

Jerusalem: Prepare for afflictions, by which God prepares his people for himself. *He is not fit for the reward in glory* (saith *Bernard*) (r) *who is not ready to ascend the Gibbet as the way to it.* We are fallen on the last times, which are times of abounding iniquity, *Mat.* 24. 12. sinning, and therefore like to be suffering-times, called perilous times; cruel times, 2 *Tim.* 3. 1. *Beza* renders it, *troublesome times*; *Tremelius*, *hard times*, χαλεποὶ, it comes from χαλάω, to bring damage, or to overturn; they will be overturning times; times of desolation, as Christ propheſies of them, *Mat.* 24. 15. *daies of vengeance*, *Luke* 21. 22. *These be the daies of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled*: *Great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no nor ever shall be*, *Mat.* 24. 21. called the great and terrible day of the Lord, when the Sun shall be turned into darkness, and the Moon into blood. *Joel* 2. 31. *The Sun shall be turned into darkness, and the Moon into blood before the great and terrible day of the Lord come.* *Cocceius* thinks this time to fall under the sixth seal, *Rev.* 6. 12. under which 'tis said, *These are they which come out of great tribulation.* I rather think that the sixth seal reckons with the enemies of God's people, and brings redemption to the Saints under great tribulation. That which we may clearly gather hence is, that those last times will be times of sore calamities, both personal and publick, to Nations, and to the Church of God; and what a por-

(r) *Non est idoneus ad præmium qui nondum paratus est ad patibulum.*

tion

tion of those amazing troubles may fall upon the people of this age, we know not: this is certain, God seems to give his call from Heaven, as well as out of his sanctuary, to prepare to meet with him, *Amos* 4. 12. to gird up the loins of our mind, *Rev.* 16. 15. to keep our garments on; to watch lest he come as a thief, *Luke* 12. 35, 36. to have our vessels stor'd with Oil, and our lamps burning; and to reckon on midnight sitting up, and be as men that look for the coming of their Lord: *Matth.* 25. 6. *To watch and pray always, that we may be counted worthy to escape the things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man,* Luke 21. 36.

Fourthly, The time of Death is a spending time, and calls for great provisions for that long journey; and great change the Soul is then passing into. Death is the King of Terrors: O how amazing is the sight of it to a natural eye, and an awakened conscience! the work that death comes to do is frightful work to flesh and blood; to pluck a soul out of its ancient dwellings, to take it from all its acquaintance, friends, relations, and earthly All, from the comforts of the whole World: never to see or enjoy them more, as they have done; nay, to pull down this earthly tabernacle, not to leave a stone upon a stone, but quite to demolish it to the ground, is a great change: to lay a writ on the soul's back, and in a moment to bring it to judgment, from all its acquaintance, friends, and dearest relations, to the vision of an infinite holy God, there to receive its eternal doom, and to enter into a new estate, out of which he shall never

never depart, either of bleſſedneſs or miſery. To take the ſoul off from all the means of ſalvation. and poſſibility of change out of that eſtate into which, by death he enters; that if the ſoul ſhould die in his ſins, there's no future repentance, or any thing can be done to amend his ill condition: this will be terrible to a guilty conſcience, ſenſible of many ſins unrepented of, many duties neglected, much time loſt, great hypocriſies uncur'd, many fears unremoved, and doubts unanſwered. Now for ſuch a ſoul, in a moment, to come to judgment, and to have no time allowed him to ſet things in order for ſo great a compearance, and to ſtate his account for that final Audit, is an amazing providence. The time of death is alſo a time of the greateſt light, when the ſoul's eye ſhall be opened to ſee things as they are, no more in a glaſs, but face to face; then the ſoul that hath been dark all its days, ſhall ſee clearly things it never knew. As 'tis ſaid of the Mole, that it is blind all its time, till it comes to die, and then it ſees: So they that would not ſee, ſhall then ſee, and be aſhamed; then ſhall ſouls ſee things as they are, and find that to be evil which they thought good, and that to be good which they thought to be evil. Death is the greateſt informer, and makes the largeſt diſcovery of things that ever was; it brings to light the hidden things of darkneſs, ſins the world never knew, and ſins it may be the ſoul it ſelf never ſaw, or thought it ſelf guilty of: then will the leaſt flaw, error, unſoundneſs, neglect, failing, be fully ſeen; then the things that now ſeem to be ſmall, will then appear

appear to be great; and those things that were taken for mountains, will be less than one single grain of dust.

Death is a time also when conscience hath its quickest senses, and liveliest acts, when it sees, hears, feels, fears, all things as they are, and without any other witness, becomes both Accuser and Judge: then *Judas* needed no Accuser to charge him, or Judge to condemn him, but his own conscience; nor Executioner to dispatch him, but his own hand. *What's the matter, man,* (said Mr. *Perkins* to a Malefactor, going up the ladder, and his countenance shewing the inward terrors of his soul,) *art thou afraid to die? O, no Sir, said he, but of a worse matter.* So another upon death-bed, and under a terrible sight of her wicked life, when one that was by offered something to comfort her against the fear of death, replied, *Were it but to die, it were nothing: A world* (saith another, upon the border of eternity, and under conscience-affrightings) *for one inch of time? O give me one inch of time!* Luther *speaks of an* Eremite *who, a little before his death, stood very sad, never stirring out of his place for three days, having his eyes fixt towards Heaven; and being ask'd the reason of this posture, answered, he was afraid to die: His Scholars began to comfort him, telling him he need not to fear death, who had been so holy in his life; but he replies, 'tis true, I have lived well, and been obedient, but God's judgments are otherwise than Man's judgment,* Tom. 4. fol. 59.

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The time of death is a time of great temptation also; then Satan usually brings forth his chiefest strength to weaken the soul's faith; 'tis his last onset, and that is the hottest; as men that storm a Garrison, in their last assault they usually put forth their utmost strength: *Then he opposeth us with most armed force. In this last assault,* (s) (saith *Luther*) *'tis not as in other temptations, where faith and hope doth fight; for here he sets upon the very resistance, and the strife is about striving, and the war is maintain'd by another war: Here the fight is, that it may be lawful to fight, and to resist him whose greatest policy is then to dissuade from resisting; laughing at our hope, as if it were already vanquished, and it were to no purpose to resist.* This is a critical time, and hard to stand; the last enemy is death; when the soul must have the whole armour of God, and be found not in his own righteousness, but take sanctuary in the grace of God, the righteousness and faithfulness of Christ. *Death is somewhat dreary,* (saith Mr. *Cooper*) *and the streams of that* Jordan *between us and our* Canaan *run furiously; but they stand still when the Ark comes: let your anchor be cast within the veil, and fastned on the rock Jesus; let the end of the three fold cord be buckled to the heart; so shall ye go through* (t). *When thou art tempted,* (saith *Luther*) *and seest no way to escape; shut thine eye,*

(s) *Instructissimis copiis non impugnat, ipsam resistentiam aggreditur, & de certamine certamen est; & bellum alio bello defendendum, hic pugnandum ut pugnare liceat, & resistendum ei qui resistere dissuadet,* Luth. (t) *Claude oculos & nihil respondes, & commenda causam Deo. Idem.*

answer

answer nothing, and commit the cause to God: This (saith he) *is the chiefest wisdom we should attend to in the hour of death.* This was *Bernard's* course and comfort, when on the point of death; *I have lived wickedly,* (saith he) *but thou, Lord Jesus Christ, enjoyest Heaven by a double right; first, because thou art the Son of God; then, because by thy death and passion thou hast obtained it:* (u) *thou keepest the first thy self by thy birthright; the last thou bestowest on me, not for my works, but of thy grace.* Christians, you had need be well furnish'd for the hour of death, (your greatest and most difficult hour) laying in all the provisions you can for a sure and comfortable passage to glory. Thus you see Wisdom's Merchants have more to do than keep up present life and comfort, they must lay in for times to come; for times of temptation, desertion, affliction, and the hour of death.

Advice 4:

Fourthly, If you have good trading with God, then lay out for God. This is reasonable work, pleasing work, honourable work, profitable work.

First, 'Tis reasonable work to lay out for God; he deserves it, 'tis his due; all your mercies are his interest; *I will return and take away my corn in the time thereof, and my wine in the season thereof; I will recover my wooll and my flax given to cover her nakedness,* Hos. 2. 9. Though God gives his people the use of mercy, yet he

(u) *Hoc servas pro te jure authoritatis, illud largitis mihi non juris operum, sed gratiæ.*

keeps the propriety in his own hand: God is the *Alpha*, and ſhould be the *Omega*, the Author, and 'tis reaſonable he ſhould be the end of all our mercies. James 1. 17. *Every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights*: And (as beams from the Sun) is derived from his bounty, as his peculiar Off-ſpring. (*w*) *My goods are thy gifts* (ſaith *Auguſtine*) *All our good is either himſelf, or what comes from him*: Both trading and thriving are from him, and ſhould alſo be for him, both principle and intereſt are God's own, *Mat.* 25. 27. If you lay not out your mercies for God, you rob him of his due. Your mercies are the Lords, not only by that intereſt he reſerves in them, but by your reſignation of them unto him. Chriſtians, when you gave up your ſelves to the Lord, you gave up all your intereſts and capacities alſo, 2 *Cor.* 5. 8. To keep back any part of your All from God, is to lye to the Holy Ghoſt. *Acts* 5. 3. *Why hath Satan filled thy heart to lye to the Holy Ghoſt, and to keep back part of the price of the Land*: No lower terms will paſs in reconciliation with God, than what *Ahab* yielded to *Benhadad*, 1 *Kings* 20. 4. *My Lord, O King, according to thy ſaying I am thine, and all that I have.* If you are not your own, much leſs any thing you have, is abſolutely yours. God gives his people but a conditional intereſt in all things beneath himſelf, ſo far as it ſutes his pleaſure, uſe, and glory. To keep back any part of your capacities and intereſts from God, when by his

(*w*) *Bona mea, dona tua. Omne bonum noſtrum vel ipſe vel ab ipſo.* Aug.

Word

Word and Providence he calls for it, for his ſervice, name and people is hypocriſie, lying, fraud and rebellion, and contrary to the Lord's undoubted intereſt, both by creation, redemption, and your own grant, *Hoſ.* 2. 8. 2 *Cor.* 7. 20.

Beſides, you receive not your mercies as Owners, but as Stewards, to keep and uſe them for him, and according to his inſtruction, 1 *Pet.* 4. 10. *As every one hath received the gift* (whether of grace, or gifts of grace, inward or outward gifts, ſpiritual or temporal, 'tis all one if he have received it) *ſo let him adminiſter the ſame, as good Stewards of the manifold grace of life.* Your intereſts are God's gifts; your abundance, his Bounty and truſt to be beſtowed to his uſe and pleaſure, for which you muſt give an account.

Secondly, 'Tis pleaſing work to lay out for God: *Paul* counted not his life dear to lay out for Chriſt, *Acts* 20. 24. *Peter* and *John* rejoyced that they were counted worthy to part with their name, and to undergo reproach for Chriſt, *Acts* 5. 41. Nazianzen *was glad that he had ſomething of value, to wit, his* Athenian *learning to part with for Chriſt. The Mother of* William Hunter *the Martyr rejoyced, that ever ſhe was ſo happy as to bear ſuch a Child as could find in his heart to loſe his life for Chriſt's Name ſake, Acts and Mon. p.* 13. 96. Nothing ſeems burdenſome to do or part with for Chriſt, to a ſoul that loves him: How willingly did *Jonathan* ſtrip himſelf of the Robe that was upon him, and gave it to *David*, and his garments even to his ſword, and to his bow, and to his girdle, becauſe

he loved him; much more pleasing will it be to a soul loving Christ, to part with his All for Christ, 1 *Sam.* 18. 4.

Thirdly, 'Tis honourable work also to lay out for God; *He that gives to the poor lendeth to the Lord, Prov.* 19. 17. And is not this honourable to make God a debtor, and to get him who is over all blessed for ever, to become bound to his creature: O what honour is this, that the giver of All should seem to be beholding to his creatures, who have their All from him! Have you any thing you can part with for Christ? think what honour 'tis that God intrusts you with the bestowing of such gifts for him; the Lord might have made you beggars, not givers; who hath made you to differ? why is grace, gifts, strength, estate, time, put into thy hand, and not into others? it shews a good opinion God hath of thy faithfulness, and so bespeaks honour: O let not God have cause to revoke this estimation!

Fourthly, 'Tis profitable work: The more you lay out for God, the more you get for your selves; there's no such way to gather, as to scatter for God; your improvements of mercy to God's end, are but as sowing of seed, which will come in again with greater encrease, 2 *Cor.* 9. 6. *He that soweth sparingly, shall reap sparingly, and he that soweth bountifully, shall reap bountifully.* Laying out for God is Trading secur'd, not liable to hazards, as earthly undertakings are, but under a promise of sure and great returns, as hath been proved, and that is profit. Laying out for God, is lending to God upon

upon interest; *Mat.* 19. 29. where both Principal and Interest are sure. *Prov.* 19. 17. *He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth to the Lord, and that which he hath given, will he pay him again.* The Lord takes it as done to himself, and will repay with large use; (x) he lends to the Lord upon bond for use, as the Hebrew imports, גומלו, and he will surely repay it. God is bound for it, and therefore the debt is sure. 'Tis a great mistake in men, and that which starves their expensiveness for God, to think the more they give, the less they have; whereas laying out for God brings in principal and use; it sanctifies what is left, and brings it under a promise of encrease. As the pouring out of the Widows Oyl fill'd her Vessels; the more she poured out, the more she had, 2 *Kings* 4. 5, 6. And as the Widow of *Zarephtah*, by giving first to the Prophet, secur'd her own provision in a time of famine, 1 *Kings* 17. 13, 14. *For thus saith the Lord God of* Israel, *the barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of Oyl fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth.* Mal. 3. 10. *Bring ye all the tythes into the Store-house, that there may be meat in my house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of Heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it.* 'Tis mens niggardliness to God, and close-handedness to the poor, and pious uses, is one reason doubtless of the wastes and blastings on their outward interests this day. *Prov.* 11. 28. *The liberal soul*

(x) *Tibi a Domino tuum cum amplissimo fœnore reddendum.* Mercer.

shall be made fat, and he that watereth shall be watered also himself. *Cartwright* and *Baine* think this is meant of spiritual gifts, as the former verse is of external good things. But as *Mercer* well observes, the sentence is general, and takes in any supplies that are given to such as are needy (*y*) Such shall be made fat; he shall be so far from being impoverished thereby, as it shall encrease his substance; *He shall be watered as with showres in Autumn.* The latter rain, which is fruitfulizing: The streams of charity are not like running water that passeth away, but as fruitful showres that come again with encrease. *Prov.* 3. 9, 10. *Honour the Lord with thy substance, so shall thy barns be filled with plenty.* Multitude of promises might be heaped up, which give in a joynt-testimony to this truth; as *Mat.* 25. 29. *Eccles.* 11. 1. *Prov.* 28. 27. *Prov.* 22. 9. *Isa.* 58. 7, 8, 10, 11. with many others, and are abundant security for the blessing to such as lay out for God.

Besides, this is a proof of your love to God, 2 *Cor.* 8. 24. *Wherefore shew ye to them, and before the Churches the proof of your love,* 1 Joh. 3. v. 17. *Who so hath this worlds goods, and seeth his Brother hath need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?* 1 John 4. 20. *For he that loveth not his Brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?* By true charity to your poor Brethren you evidence your love to God; that secures all your true and needed mercies.

(*y*) *Qui rigat*, i. e. *qui de sup erogat in egenos.*

Fifthly,

Fifthly, This also is pleasing to God, *Phil.* 4. *v.* 18. *Having received of* Epaphroditus *the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God*, Heb. 13. 16. *Isa.* 56. 4. and that is surely prosperous.

Then Christians, if God hath first given unto you; if you love him; if you would please him; if you would prosper in soul, body and estate, lay out for God: If you have freely received, freely give; whatever God hath intrusted you with, expend it for him.

First, Lay out your time for God: Among the many wastes of mercies souls are guilty of, this is not the least; *waste of precious time*: Though there is no Creature-blessing of greater worth than time, in which a foundation is laid, of all those mercies that are eternal. Time is a talent, a treasure; not only a mercy, but that without which there can be no mercy: Consider for your improvement of Time;

First, Your Time is not yours, but God's, made by him, and for him. *Psal.* 76. 17. *The day is thine, and the night is thine; thou hast prepared the Light, and the Sun.* Time is that space between two Eternities, limited by Divine pleasure to Divine use. Job 14. 5. *Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee; thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass.* And if Time be the Lord's, then 'tis fit it should be used for God. *Give unto God the things that are God's.* When thou sinnest or trifleſt away this Time, think on this; *now I rob God, and spend anothers goods.* You that hate robbery of men, be not thieves to God and your own

ſouls: Time is God's, not thine own.

Secondly, Think how much you have loſt of paſt Time, and this ſhould make you choice of preſent Time. *Pſal.* 90. 9. *We ſpend our years as a tale that is told*; which vaniſheth into the air, and is ſoon gone. *Much of our time* (z) (ſaith one) *is pluck'd away from us, more is ſtoln away, but moſt of all doth ſlide away. O how little a piece of life is that we live!* How much of thy time hath been conſumed in the grave? How much in the market-place? much ſlept away in the Vineyard: When Nature, Self, the World and Sin have had their ſhares of every day, how little a portion hath been left for God? Hence 'tis the Apoſtle adviſes Saints to redeem their Time; to get Time for God and their ſouls, though with ſome loſs to other intereſts, becauſe it hath been taken captive by Self, Sin, and the World, and held priſoner ſo long. This waſte of former Time makes it abſolutely needful for them that will reach their journeys end before their day be gone, to redeem Time from their callings, recreations, refreſhments, idleneſs and reſt, for the recovery of neglected work, or they will find it wanting when they come to die. *Give me my time again*, ſaid a woman on her death-bed, being under fears about her eternal ſtate; nothing could relieve her troubled ſoul, who had loſt ſalvation-time.

Thirdly, Conſider how ſhort and uncertain your remaining Time is, or may be: The whole

(z) *Multum Temporis eripitur nobis, plus ſubducitur, plurimum effluit, exigua pars eſt vitæ quam vos vivimus.* Seneca.

Time

Time of thy life is but a ſpan, a hand-breadth, a poſt, a Weavers ſhuttle, a vapour, a tale that is told, as a flower of the field, things of no duration, *Job* 9. 21. *Pſal.* 39. 5. *James* 4. 14. *Time* (ſaith one) *is a ſhort parentheſis in a long period; ſo ſhort, that before we can name it, our preſent Time is become paſt Time. Our whole life* (ſaith another) *conſiſts but of two days, the day of our birth, and the day of our death*; for no ſooner born, but we begin to die. Time is on the wing, haſtening to Eternity every moment: Time travels when you ſleep, and runs when you creep: Time goes on when you ſtop, and gets ground when you go back: As the ſtream haſtens to the Ocean day and night; ſo doth Time to Eternity: O uſe your Time for God while you have it! it will ſhortly be none of yours; if you do not uſe it, you will loſe it; you were as good let God have your Time, as to let it run away to no purpoſe; if duty do not improve it, ruſt will conſume it; the Devil, World and Fleſh will ingroſs it; and 'tis better give it to God, than let the Moth and Caterpillar devour it. Beſides,

Fourthly, Can you put it to better profit than to lay it out for God? he is the beſt Chapman for your Time; nothing will give you ſo much intereſt for Time as God will; put all the gain of other Time into the ſcale, with the Incomes of God's Time, and you will ſoon ſee the difference. Time laid out for God will be the beſt ſecurity for your own Time: give God his Time, and he will give you your Time; all that Time that is needful for a bleſſed Eternity; There's no ſuch way to enjoy Time, as to uſe

it

for God. *Prov.* 3. 16. *Length of days is in her right hand.* Time expended for God will not only ſecure, but ſanctifie your Time alſo, as the Firſt-fruits did the lump, *Rom.* 11. 16. Beſides, Time devoted to God brings in eternal intereſt: Though Time be but a thing temporal, yet improved, it will bring to things eternal, 2 *Cor.* 4. 18. nay it will bring you mercy in the time of need: Give God your working-time, and he will feed you when in your unſerviceable time. *When I was a young man* (ſaid Mr. *Bruce*) *I was diligent, and liv'd by faith in the Son of God, but now I am old, and am not able to do ſo much, yet he condeſcends to feed me with lumps of ſenſe.* [Fulfill. of Scripture.]

Fifthly, You muſt give an account for your time to God; he takes notice of mens time, how 'tis ſpent; and accordingly will judg them: Luke 13. 7. *Theſe three years I come ſeeking fruit on this Fig-tree, and can find none; cut it down, why cumbreth it the ground?* Pſalm 95. 10. *Forty years long was I grieved with this people.* Luke 19. 44. *Becauſe thou kneweſt not the time of thy viſitation.* God looks for fruit from his people, according to their months, *Ezek.* 47. 12. O how much is it your concernment to order your diſburſements of time to a conſiſtency with your comfortable account in the day of Chriſt! then you will wiſh God had more of your time, when you come to reckoning for it: what a blank will there be in our account of time, if it be not better beſtowed than hitherto? That time will yield you moſt comfort when you come to eternity, which was ſpent for God here.

Sixthly,

Sixthly, How can you bethink a little time for God, who hath not thought an eternity of mercy too much for you? Christians, 'tis salvation, with eternal glory, he hath prepared for you, 2 *Tim.* 2. 10. A Crown incorruptible, an Inheritance that fadeth not away, a Kingdom that cannot be shaken: Upon this very argument the Apostle presses the Saints to unweariedness in present work, *Gal.* 6. 8. Think how disingenuous 'tis thus to requite the Lord that hath dealt so bountifully with you; to with-hold your time from him, who first gave it to you, and hath denied it to others, and will shortly close up your troublous time with eternal rest, in blessed Mansions of purest pleasures with himself: Let this love of Christ shame you for misimproved time, and constrain you, for the future, to lay out all possible time for God.

Secondly, Lay out your strength for God; he is the God of your strength, he hath right to it, and use for it, *Psal.* 43. 2. He hath work for you which calls for all your strength: *His works are great, greatly to be sought out of all that have pleasure therein*, Psal. 111. 2. *His mercies are great, and greatly to be praised*: Psal. 86. 13. *His anger is great, and greatly to be feared*: 2 *King.* 23. 26. His tryals and rebukes on his own Children are many times great, which need great faith and patience to bear up under them, and the strength of grace to make a right use of them: *Psal.* 71. 10. *Which hath shewn me great and sore troubles*: You do not know what need you may have of all the strength your

hearts and graces are capable to receive, to carry you through your remaining tryals and troubles: you have not yet resisted unto blood, or been brought to fiery tryals, nor seen such days as never yet were, or shall be: And therefore you had need be girded with strength, and to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus; and one way to it, is to use what you have for God, *Heb.* 5. 14. God's service also calls for expended strength; *Luke* 10. 27. *Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy strength*, 1 *Chron.* 26. 8. The strength of thy heart laid out, inward strength for God in his service, the strength of your whole souls; and outward strength, the strength of your bodies also in the work of God. So did our Lord Jesus, he wasted his strength in the service of his Father, that at thirty four years old he was taken to be neer fifty: he was weary in his work. And *Paul* did spend, and was spent for Christ, 2 *Cor.* 12. 15. And *David* cried out, *My knees are weak through fasting*, Psal. 119. 24. *Glorifie God in your bodies, and in your spirits, which are the Lord's*, 1 Cor. 6. 20. *In labours more abundant*: 2 Cor. 11. 23. *Striving for the faith of the Gospel.* Religion is no easie work; *Ministers* (saith Mr. *Burroughs*) *must venture their strength for Christ*, and so must all that are Christ's: 2 *Cor.* 11. 27. *In wearinesse, in painfulnes, in watchings.* Religion is worth all your labours and exhausted strength; men tire themselves for the world; how much more should they for God and glory?

Thirdly, Lay out your gifts and graces for God, and the good of souls: 1 *Cor.* 12. 7. *The mani-*

manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal: that's God's end why he gives gifts to any, that every one who hath them should improve them to his glory, and the good of others. A capacity of serving God, and furthering his Kingdom in the World, is such a priviledge as the Saints in Heaven enjoy not: and the Angels, when imployed in any subserviency towards it, readily and chearfully prosecute it. *Angels are vigilant creatures, and wait for opportunities; and when they come, will not lose them*, [Greenh.] Yea, 'tis such a prize, as being once lost, can never be enjoyed again; nor gracious souls ever more return to their Stewardship, when once 'tis given up; and therefore should be heedfully regarded, and faithfully used whiles continued. God gives not talents to be napkin'd up, nor lights to be hid under a bushel: none of us liveth to himself, *Rom.* 14. 7. All the characters of Saints, and those relations they stand in, ingage to usefulness: They are the lights of the world set in a candlestick, that they may cause their light to shine forth before men, *Mat.* 5. 14, 15. They are the salt of the earth, of purpose to savour others. *Mat.* 5. 13. *If salt hath lost its savour, 'tis good for nothing but the dunghil.* They are Stars in God's Firmament, to communicate their light and influence unto others, 1 *Cor.* 15. 41. Vessels in God's house to be meet for use, 2 *Tim.* 2. 20, 21. Stones in his building, which have a mutual usefulness to bear up each other, and toward preserving the whole, *Eph.* 2. 2. Branches in the Vine, that yield their fruit for the cheering

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ing the hearts of men, *Judg.* 9. 13. Trees in God's garden full of ſap, *Pſal.* 104. 16. Members in the body, to impart their nouriſhment to each other, *Eph.* 4. 16. and diſcharge their reſpective duties, of ſympathy, care, and helpfulneſs to their fellow-members: 1 *Theſ.* 5. 14. *We exhort you, brethren, to warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, ſupport the weak, be patient towards all men*: Uſe all your capacities for God while you have them, leſt he take them from you, or opportunity to improve them.

Fourthly, Lay out your earthly intereſts for God, *Prov.* 3. 19. *Honour the Lord with thy ſubſtance, and with the firſt fruits of thy encreaſe*: Give God his due in maintaining his Meſſengers, and keeping up his worſhip; alluding to thoſe firſt-fruits of *Iſrael*'s encreaſe, which were the Lord's by ſpecial appropriation to his ſervice, *Exod.* 22. 29. and ſupply of his Miniſtry among them, *Lev.* 23. 20. the equity of which obliges in Goſpel-times, though their Ceremonial and Judicial reſpect ceaſe: and this duty is reinforc'd under the Goſpel by more ample arguments taken from the light of Nature, the law of *Moſes*, and will of Chriſt, 1 *Cor.* 9. from *ver.* 9. to 15. To this head is referr'd that command; *Gal.* 6. 6. *Let him that is taught in the word communicate to him that teacheth in all good things*; *for God will not be mocked*: (as they do who pretend Religion, and yet are defective in this manifeſt duty,) preſſing them to unweariedneſs in this expenſiveneſs for God, whatever diſcouragements they meet with upon the aſſurance

surance of the blessed fruit of obedience to the will of Christ herein, *ver.* 7, 8, 9. 'Tis not the maintaining or welfare of a few men in the World, that is the design of this great Command of Christ; but the tendency this hath to the promulgation of the Gospel, and keeping up the instituted worship of God, the conversion of Sinners, and edification of Saints successively in every generation, to which these supplies are necessary, that the servants of Christ might attend on their Ministrations without distraction; and whoever (a subject of Christ, and sharer of this priviledge) draws back from this duty, he is chargeable not only for violating the Royal righteous Law of Christ, but for being guilty of subverting his Government, Crown, and Dignity; and endeavouring in his measure, the ruining his interest, of hindering the conversion and edification of souls; and whatever damage hereby comes to the spiritual or eternal welfare of souls; it will be laid on their heads in the day of the righteous judgment of Christ.

Another greatly concerning duty contain'd in this Scripture, is charitable communications, feed the poor, feed the hungry, cloath the naked, relieve the oppressed. [*Bede Alapid.*] This is to honour God with your substance; not to spend it on your lusts, to live high, to fare deliciously, to build your nests on high; but to make your abundance a supply for the good of those that are in wants, 2 *Cor.* 8. 14. *Isa.* 58. 7. 10. *Mat.* 5. 42. *Jam.* 1. 27. *Heb.* 13. 16. *Luke* 14. 12, 13. Otherwise,

First,

First, All your Religion is in vain, *James* 1. *v.* 26, 27. Your knowledge, desires, affections, frames, tasts, enjoyments, marks, experiences, seeming graces, duties, are all nothing, and can never prove the truth of your grace, the safety of your estates, and goodness of your Religion, if you are found defective in this great duty of Charity. Psal. 112. 4, 5. *Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness; he is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous. A good man sheweth favour, and lendeth.* Let men say what they will, if they be covetous, hard-hearted, have no compassion to them that are in wants, have no heart to give or lend to needy ones, they have no true grace in them. *Verse* 9. *He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor, his righteousness endureth for ever.* Men may talk, and pray, and seem to be eminent Christians; profess love to God and their Neighbours, and yet all the while be deceived, and have not a jot of grace in them, while their hearts are cruel, their hands shut to their poor Brethren. Remember the young man in the Gospel, and fear thine own estate if thy heart be glued to thy possessions: — *How dwelleth the love of God in him!* 1 *Joh.* 3. 17. He loves not God, and God loves not him, that shuts up the bowels of his compassion from his poor and afflicted Brother. *That's pure Religion, and undefiled before God, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world,* Jam. 1. 27. *Shew me thy faith by thy works,* Jam. 2. 18. *Religion* (saith one) *is not only contemplative, but the greatest part of it like the Mathematicks is*

is in demonstration: There can be no assurance to thy soul thou art in God's favour without charity. Indeed faith is the life of a Christian, but the breath whereby he is known to live is charity, Adams on *Peter. If I have not Charity* (saith the Apostle) *I am nothing, I am as a sounding brass, or a tinckling Cymbal,* 1 Cor. 13. 1, 2. Which Charity lies in the spring (pure Love within) and the streams: (communications of Love without.)

Secondly, Acts of Charity are part of Religious worship; if you give not to the poor liberally, you worship not God fully. What we interpret that word in *James, Religion, Beza* renders it *Worship*, θρησκία: In feeding the poor we worship God. *A Christian* (saith a Reverend Divine) *hath an holy Art of turning duties of the second Table, into duties of the first, and in respects to men, they worship God,* Dr. *Manton. To do good and communicate, forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased,* Heb. 13. 16. In the former verse he encourages them to acts of Worship upon the account of their High Priest in Heaven. *By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually*: And in this verse is part of this Religious Worship, and that which God takes most delight in, he puts them on duties of Charity, which he also calls *Sacrifices*, θυσίαις. God will have mercy rather than sacrifice, *Mat.* 9. 13. The neglect of justice and mercy rendred the most specious duties of God's Worship an abomination in his account. *Bring no more vain oblations, Incense is an abomination to me, the new Moons and Sabbaths, the calling of Assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even*

the solemn Meetings, Isa. 1. 13, 14, 17. Though God hath appointed these duties, and was glorified by them when duly performed, yet done by persons who lived in the constant omission of mercy and justice; they were a loathing to him. *Learn to do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.*

Thirdly, God is much glorified by these duties of Charity, *Mat.* 5. 16. *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorifie your Father which is in Heaven.* By charitable deeds the bowels of others are refreshed, and the glory of God advanced. 2 *Cor.* 9. 12. *For the administration of this service, not only supplieth the want of the Saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God.* In this shine forth the virtues of God in his people; they see the truth and excellency of his grace in them, by reason of which they glorifie God. It causeth men to think well of God, and to speak well of his people and ways. As the Heathen of old, when they saw the patience and unbroken courage of the Christians under their cruel torments, cryed out, *Great is the God of the Christians.* So when the world shall see the Goodness and Charity of the Saints, they will adore the bowels of Christ in them, and be convinc'd that there is an excellency in that Religion which yields such excellent fruit; whereas the niggardliness of Christians brings a great deal of dishonour to God, and disgrace on that Religion they profess while they give occasion to carnal men to reflect this severe charge on them: *None more covetous than Professours: in*

bargains,

bargains, how will they stand for a penny! in charity, how cold are they! how hard is it to screw an alms out of their hands! if this be Religion, the Lord keep me from such Religion. This begets an *odium* in the men of the world against Religion, and the waies of God: But *woe to that man by whom offences come; it had been better for him that a milstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drown'd in the midst of the Sea,* Mat. 18. 6, 7.

Fourthly, Acts of Charity purely done will evidence your right to glory. *Mat.* 25. 34, 35. 36. *Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the Kingdom prepar'd for you from the foundations of the world; for I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye cloathed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came to me.* The enquiry in that great day will not be after mens profession, light, frames and duties of Worship, but after the fruits of ther faith and love as evidential, not causal, of their right to glory; *Here is held out* (saith one) *not the* (b) *cause of their salvation, but the sign and testimony of them that believe, &c.* (c) The Kingdom is obtained by way of Inheritance; (*Come inherit the Kingdom:*) and prepared for them, as a portion for children, not purchased by them as the procurements of their works;

(c) *Non causa salutis, sed* τηκμήριον, *& Testimonium credentius his verbis innuitur.* (c) *Opera quæ Christus prædicaturus est non* ποιητικὰ, *sunt, sed* σημαντικὰ, *respectu fidei, & finis ejus vitæ æternæ.* Glass.

The reward is freely beſtowed on all intereſted in adoption-grace, of which title the bearing proof in that day will be the fruits of love to thoſe that are Chriſt's; words will not be ſufficient to demonſtrate this love then; it will not ſerve mens turn to ſay they loved Saints, except it were extended to all, yea the leaſt of Saints, and proved by acts of love, and communications to all their neceſſities; and that not ſome ſmall pittance of their abundance, which they valued not, but it muſt be ſuch portions and kinds of relief, which their neceſſities call for; in viſiting, feeding, cloathing, owning, comforting, receiving into their houſes, and whatever help they were capable to expreſs, and this as readily and heartily expended to them as they would lay them out to themſelves and theirs, that being the rule of Charity: *Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thy ſelf*, *Mat.* 22. 39. The want of this evidence, whatever elſe may be pretended, will finally and eternally caſt ſouls in that laſt and terrible day, *Mat.* 25. 41. *to the end.* Do not deceive thy ſoul with falſe hopes of glory; not one mark will paſs for Heaven, where there is a hard heart, and cloſe hands towards poor and diſtreſſed Saints: *For he ſhall have judgment without mercy, that hath ſhewed no mercy*, Jam. 2. 13. There is no room for you in Divine bowels, if you ſhut up your own bowels againſt them that are in miſery. See in that Parable, *Mat.* 18. 33, 34, 35. the dreadful end of thoſe who are any way cruel to their fellow-ſervants, having themſelves taſted the mercy of their Lord. The liberal diſtributions of your eſtates

estates to the poor, is the onely way to make them truly serviceable to your souls, whiles this becomes the occasion of your reception into everlasting habitations. *Luke* 16. 9. *Make to your selves friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail they may receive you into everlasting habitations* (*d.*) The mammon or riches of this world, is called the riches of unrighteousness, because they are unrighteously gotten, or unrighteously kept, to the detriment of those that need them; or unrighteously spent to the hurt of those that have them; but the way to change their nature, and to make them profitable, is to lay them out to the poor, who will receive you, or witness for you in that day to prove the truth of your love, by which you shall be received into glory.

Fifthly, They are the sure way to blessing here. *Luke* 6. 38. *Give and it shall be given to you, good measure pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom; for with the same measure that ye meet withall, it shall be measured to you again*: Intimating, that giving to the poor, is but lending to the Lord, as hath been shewed, and it shall be surely repaid in this life, either in kind or in value, in such things as they need; yea oft-times in the same coin, and that to sufficient requital, good measure amplified by three metaphors, *pressed down, shaken together, and running over*;

(*d*) *Opus hoc receptionis in æterna habitacula solius Dei est, tribuitur autem pauperibus quia ipsi sententiam Christi Judicis de salvatione piorum ἐυεργετῶν approbabunt, & beneficentiæ quæ fidei fructus est testes erunt.* Glas.

that is (saith *(e) Scultetus*) God will so bless them, that they shall be sensible they are sufficiently repaid, *2 Cor.* 9. 6. *Deut.* 15. 10, 11. *Mat.* 10. 41, 42. *Psal.* 41. 12. *Prov.* 11. 24. *Job* was a man of great Charity, *Job* 29. 12, 13. a man of great prosperity in the world, *v.* 6, 7. and though for the tryal of his faith he was stript of all for a season, yet did the Lord after all turn his water into wine, *chap.* 42. 10. *Rahab* entertained the spies, and saved her self and family from ruine by it, The *Shunamite*, the Widow of *Zarephath* got by laying out acts of Charity to the Prophet. *Tiberius* the second was a person of great liberality to the poor; 'tis said of him, that whatever *Justinus* his predecessour had contracted by covetousness, *Tiberius* freely distributed to the poor: And when *Sophia*, *Justine*'s Widow, reproved him for his excess of Charity, he replies, *(g) I trust in the Lord that our Exchequer shall never want money, while the poor are maintained out of it.* Neither did his expectations fail; for as the same Author reports, he found a vast treasure in his Palace, hidden under the pavement, which could scarce be emptied for divers daies: Thus God blessed his bountiful hand. Mr. *Gouge*, in his *Surest and Safest Way of Thriving* (a book worth your getting, and to which I refer you) gives many modern instances of this great truth; I

(e) Ita illis benefacturum ut sensuri sint se esse remunerator. (g) Confido in Domino quod non detrit pecunia fisco nostro quamdiu pauperes Eleemosynam inde acceptori sunt. Est enim is thesaurus ingens de quo Dominus dixit Matth. 6. 10. Theatr. Histor. Theoret. Tract.

shall

ſhall for their ſakes who have not the Book mention this one, concerning the pious and imitable reſolution of Mr. *John Walter*, Citizen of *London*, who having a ſufficient eſtate to maintain his Charge, reſolv'd what further eſtate God ſhould entruſt him with, to beſtow the ſame on charitable uſes; after which vow he found his eſtate wonderfully encreaſing: A worthy preſident to ſuch as have enough to live comfortably upon, to put bounds to their further purchaſes, and entitle their ſurpluſage to the ſervice of Chriſt, and refreſhments of his Saints; a courſe men will one day find more gainful, than to join houſe to houſe, and field to field. *'Tis the beſt way* (ſaith *Chryſologus*) *for a rich man to make the bellies of the poor his barn, to ſuccour the fatherleſs and needy, and thereby to lay up treaſures in Heaven.* *Gregory* the Great was ſo devoted to Charity, that all what he had ſeem'd to be the common granary of the Church. 'Tis ſaid of *Cyprian*, he was *the blind man's eyes, the lame man's legs, the naked man's garment*; he was a man of ſo great Charity. Mr. *Fox*, the Author of the *Acts and Monuments*, never denied to give to any that asked for Jeſus ſake. *Auguſtine* ſold the Ornaments of the Church to relieve the poor. And *Baſil* in a time of great famine ſold his Land, and other goods to maintain the poor. A Duke being asked by ſome Ambaſſadors whether he could ſhew them ſome hunting-dogs gathered a great many poor people together, and ſhewing them to the Ambaſſador, ſaid, Theſe be the Dogs I daily keep, and with which I uſe to

hunt after Heaven. O that Christians would have other games in chase, than that which perishes in the using, and lay out their estates to better advantage than what appropriating them to self-interest can afford! Feed the hungry, cloath the naked, give to him that lacketh, seeing such blessed encouragements do attend this Christian duty.

Fifthly, If you have good trading in grace, then lay up for glory: If you are Wisdom's Merchants, Heaven is your Country and home, the place of your rest and eternal residence: The world is a strange Countrey to you, a spot of ground where you are set for a while to trade in to get commodities for your Countrey, and sent into it, as *Jacob* was to *Syria*, to provide for his own house, and then to return into his Country; *Gen.* 30. 30. *This is not your rest*, *Mich.* 2. 10. Christians, you are not sent hither to take root in the Earth, or with the Raven, let out of the Ark to build your nests in the world; or with the fool in the Gospel, to take your rest in your full barns, and encreased goods; but as *Joseph* was sent before into *Egypt* to make provision for his own Countrey; and as *Solomon*'s ships were sent to *Tarshish* to transport what materials were useful for the House of God, and his own house. All that you are allowed here, is but as factorage for present maintenance: Some viands and refreshments in the way, but your great business is to get such goods as will vend in your own Countrey. Remember, you are all this while left here, to fill your sacks for your own home, where your kindred and habi-

tation

tation lies: Your Father's house, and your own mansions, your treasures, pleasures, crowns, thrones, and all that you are like to have for ever, lies in your City above, whose maker and builder is God. *We know but little of Christ's love* (saith Mr. *Cooper*) *till all be perfected and spread before us in Heaven.* O lay up for Heaven! treasure up all you can for the other world whither you are going: Especially lay up these four things for Heaven:

1 *Hopes*
2 *Desires*
3 *Treasures*
4 *Preparations*
} *for Glory.*

First, Lay up sound Hopes for Heaven, 1 *Pet.* 1. 13. *Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind; be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.* Sure hopes of Heaven are of wonderful use to quicken a soul's dispatches for Heaven. *Acts* 26. 7. *Unto which promise our twelve Tribes instantly serving God day and night hope* (h) *to come.* 'Twas their hopes to enjoy those great and glorious things in the promise, that did put them on such diligence in those waies that lead to it; to strive in every duty that seem'd to have an eye to this glory, they did stretch out their hand to take hold of eternal life, as one that was near the prize. Hope puts strength and activity into the soul in its motion after God, and makes it restless and unwearied

(h) *Ex ardente, omnibus viribus toto animo.* A Lapide.

till

till it enjoy him. This argument the Apostle useth to provoke the *Hebrews* in their race towards glory: *Heb.* 12. 1. *Seeing then we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us; and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.* The weight of the argument lies in the sure and blessed issue of well-grounded hope attested by so many witnesses in the former Chap. who ran so great adventures, sustain'd so great losses, underwent such cruel deaths in chase of this eternal Crown; and not one of them miscarried, all got safe to glory, through their many fears and deaths. And seeing all that had this true hope hitherto have sped well, and the same promise is made to us; *Chap.* 11. 40. having provided some better thing for us, (better priviledges, better promises,) Let's pluck up our spirits, and at it again; and if no visible comfort or evidence meet us in our way, yet let us hold on with patience till we come to the end of our race.

Hopes of glory do also guard the soul against discouragements and difficulties. 1 *Thes.* 5. 8. *Puting on the breast-plate of Faith; and for an helmet, the hope of Salvation.* Hope arms head and heart, and keeps off the venom'd darts of Satan from ruining the soul; while well-grounded hope of a blessed end is kept up, *Israel* prevails, and the Believer is kept from being overcome: 1 *Joh.* 5. 4 *This is the victory that overcometh the World, even our Faith.*

Hope of glory maintains a patient expectation and quiet waiting for the frution of it.

Rom.

Rom. 8. 25. *If we hope for that we ſee not, then do we with patience wait for it*; and this is no ſmall mercy: Impatience hath a dangerous influence on a Chriſtian's heart, diſcouraging it, and expoſing to temptation of giving over; ſaying, *Wherefore ſhould I wait any longer?* 2 *King.* 6. 33. which danger Hope ſecures from.

Hope ſettles, and ſtays the heart; ſtilling its fears, ſcattering its doubts, and ſtrengthning its confident expectation of glory, turning perſwaſions into the higheſt certainty, even a kind of knowledge. 1 *Joh.* 3. 2. *But we know that when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him; for we ſhall ſee him as he is.* Well-grounded and improved hope in a Chriſtian's life, doth uſually end in a triumphing confidence at his death: *I ſhall ſhine* (ſaid a precious ſervant of God on his death bed,) *I ſhall ſee him as he is, and all the fair company with him, and ſhall have my large ſhare: it is no eaſy thing to be a Chriſtian; but as for me, I have got the victory, and Chriſt is holding forth his arms to embrace me; I have had my fears and faintings as another ſinful man, to be carried through creditably, but as ſure as ever he ſpake to me in his word; his ſpirit witneſſed to my heart, ſaying, fear not; he had accepted my ſufferings, and the out-gate ſhould not be matter of prayer, but of praiſe*; [Mr. *Rutherford*'s laſt words.] And a little before his death, after ſome fainting, he ſaid, *Now I feel, I believe, I enjoy, I rejoyce, I feed on* Manna, *I have Angels food; my eyes ſhall ſee my Redeemer.* O what rich cheer will hope of glory find on a death-bed! *What brightneſs is that I ſee?* (ſaid Mr. *John Holland* the

the day before his death,) *have you light up a candle?* a ſtander by anſwered, no, 'tis the Sun ſhines: *Sun ſhine, (*ſaith he*) nay, it is my Saviour ſhines; now farewel World, welcome Heaven; the day-ſtar from on high hath viſited my heart. O ſpeak it when I am gone, and preach it at my Funeral; God dealeth familiarly with men; I feel his Mercy, I ſee his Majeſty; I ſee things that are unutterable:* Hopes of glory will make the World ſeem a very poor thing in a Believer's eye; he that by faith can ſtand on Mount *Nebo*, and get one glance on the promiſed Land, as his, feeds on the firſt ripe Grapes of his own Countrey; in compariſon of which, all the World's dainties are bitter things. Hopes of glory cheers the heart in the way to glory. *Rom.* 5. 3. *And rejoyce in hope of the glory of God. Rom.* 12. 12. *Rejoycing in hope, patient in tribulation:* It makes the ſoul go merrily on, like a Ship under ſail, that hath both wind and tyde; whereas the doubting Saint drives heavily on, when winds and waves beat againſt him, being unwheel'd of Faith and Hope: Sure hope of Heaven gets honey out of the rock, and meat out of the eater, which makes his rough ways plain, and his paſſage to Heaven, pleaſant: 'Tis Chriſtians loſing their hopes of Heaven, makes them ſo uncomfortable in their paſſage through the World.

Laſtly, Well-grounded hopes of Heaven have a great influence towards preparation for it, while it hath an advantage to further his holineſs. 1 *Joh.* 3. 3. *And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himſelf as he is pure.* When the

the Apostle speaks of the faith of God's Elect, which is after godliness, *Tit.* 1. 1. as a furtherance of this holiness, lays this hope upon eternal life; *In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lye, promised before the World began*: Expectations of Heaven well laid, cannot but constrain a Soul to utmost measures of holiness. 2 *Pet.* 3. 14. *Seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that you may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.* Heaven is a place of perfect holiness, no unclean thing can enter there; which the Eye of Faith seeing, and the Soul's right to it, puts a Person upon perfecting his holiness, that he may be ready to enter in. O then lay up hopes of glory, which have such precious fruits hanging on them.

Quest. *But what are those sure hopes of glory, which will never fail of glory; and from which we may expect such excellent fruit?*

Sol. First, Sure hopes of glory, which will never fail of glory, are issued out of a saving union with the Lord Jesus, the Lord of glory. *Col.* 1. 27. *To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this Mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you the hope of glory.* Christ united to you, and dwelling in you by his Spirit, is this glorious Treasure spoken of in the former part of the verse. Here are two arguments to endear the Lord Jesus to Believers.

First,

First, That in their union with him they are invested with great and unsearchable treasures; he himself being that glorious and hidden riches open'd in the Gospel, and made over to them in their reception of him into their hearts by faith; part of which treasure they have in hand in their present union and communion with him, and the blessed fruits and consequents of it here.

Secondly, Another thing that renders Christ precious to Believers, is, that in their union with him is laid the foundation of their right to, and evidence of their hope of glory; *Quatenus est in illis extenus habent spem gloriæ.* Dav.] and assurance of their future and eternal enjoyment of himself, and all his treasure laid up in glory: There's no other way to have a right to glory, but by union with Christ, who hath purchased glory onely for those that are his, and have this spiritual union with him. Hence 'tis that the Lord Jesus Christ is called a better hope, *John* 17. 21, to 27. *Heb.* 7. 19. *For the Law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did, by which we draw near to God:* That is the Lord Jesus in his Priestly Office, of which the Ceremonial Law was a forerunner, did bring in a ground of better hope, in opening the way to God in grace and glory: All right to glory is through him who is the Lord of glory, 1 *Cor.* 2. 8. and hath the disposal of it to whom he pleases, *John* 17. 2. even to all the Father hath given him to be his; and to these he gives eternal life, *John* 10, 28. They that have union with Christ cannot perish, being mem-

members of his body, fleſh and bones; ſhould a ſoul that hath received Chriſt here, miſs of glory hereafter, then would a member of Chriſt periſh, and his body in Heaven be maimed and imperfect, which cannot be, his Church being the fulneſs of him who filleth all in all, *Eph.* 1. *v.* 21. And Chriſt hath paſt his word for it they ſhall not periſh, *John* 10. 28. Not one of them is loſt who are truly in Chriſt, *John.* 17. 10. They are his ſervants, and ſhall be where he is, *John.* 12. 26. His Spouſe, which ſhall be ever with him. Try then your union with Chriſt, Have you received him into your hearts by faith? Are you one Spirit with him, having the ſame mind in you that was in Chriſt Jeſus? you would be holy as he is holy; nothing ſhort of compleat oneneſs with Chriſt can content you: Indeed, you have carnal deſires within the borders of your ſouls, that crave for ſatisfaction, and ſometimes will have it whether you will or no, but there is another Law in your mind warring againſt this Law in your members, that cannot reſt till you arrive more to his likeneſs, who is your life, righteouſneſs and glory. Are you implanted into Chriſts death and reſurrection, brought into ſome conformity to him? And do you live upon him as the branch upon the root for all your grace and ſupply, and ſtay upon him as the ſtone upon the foundation, for your ſupport in grace unto glory, as your onely Lord and Righteouſneſs? Then are your hopes for glory ſure ſpeeding hopes.

Secondly, Truth of grace ſecures your hopes of glory, it being the earneſt, ſeal, and firſt

fruits

fruits of glory. 2 *Cor.* 1. 22. *Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.* Grace is God's Seal for glory, and what greater security can there be? 'Tis his earnest-penny, which is never taken away, as a pledge may be, but secures the whole sum; yea, 'tis part of pay. Grace is that seed of God which remaineth in him, 1 *Joh.* 3. 9. and secures the Soul's state against final Apostacy, through its union with the Spirit dwelling in him, *Rom.* 8. 11. Prove your truth of grace (though never so weak) and you will prove your title to glory: Doth your grace owe its being to the fulness of Christ, *Joh.* 1. 16. owning its derivation thence, and dependance there? Doth your grace spread it self into every part and faculty of your Soul, wholly sanctified throughout? 1. *Thes.* 5. 23. Cannot your grace mingle with sin, or own the least appearance of evil, *Rev.* 2. 2. but hath according to its measure an irreconcilable enmity against every known sin? *Gal.* 5. 17. Cannot your grace rest in any measures short of of perfection, but hath desires and endeavours after more and more grace? 1 *Pet.* 2. 3. Hath your grace pure and ultimate designs for Divine Glory, aiming in every thing, *Phil.* 1. 20, 21. that Christ may be magnified, *John* 3. 30. and self annihilated? then is your grace true grace, and will in time turn to glory.

Thirdly, Your mortifiedness to the World will be a good proof of your title to Heaven. The Heirs of Glory are chosen out of the World; are not of the World, *John* 15. 19. Redeemed from the Earth, *Rev.* 14. 3. They have not received

ceived the ſpirit of this world, but the Spirit that is of God, 1 *Cor.* 2. 12. and are crucified to it, *Gal.* 6. 14. dead to the deſires, pleaſures and intereſts of this world, *Col.* 3. 1, 2. Dead men have no ſavour or delight in things; no more have they who are dead to this world, any acquieſcing pleaſure in earthly things, which can no more ſatisfie a heavenly ſoul, than dung can feed a living man. Chriſtians, try how your hearts ſtand affected to earthly things; are theſe great in your eye, amiable to your affections, attractive on your deſires, prevalent on your wills, beyond the things of Heaven? then are your hopes of Heaven unwarrantable by any Divine Evidence, and will at laſt leave your names written on the earth.

Fourthly, Your hopes for Heaven, if right, will be active lively hopes. 1 *Pet.* 1. 3. *Who hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the reſurrection of Chriſt from the dead.* Hopes that put life in your affections (*i*) and ſpirits, and makes you vigorous after holineſs, and the way to glory, *Epheſ.* 2. 10. Right hopes for Heaven will make you run in the way to Heaven, and put you on all manner of holy converſation. *Paul*'s hopes for Heaven put him on labours and ſtrivings after perfect holineſs, 2 *Cor.* 5. 8, 9. *Phil.* 3. 12, 13, 14. Try your hopes; do they quicken you to duty, or leave you dead? You have no heart to the ways of God, or delight in approaching to him; his commands are grievous to you; this beſpeaks unſound and frail hopes

(*i*) ὡς ἐλπίδα ζῶσαν, id eſt, vivificam ſcilicet qua vivificat. Metonymia Effecti. Piſcat.

for Heaven, which will at laſt deceive you: But ſure hopes for Heaven are back'd with ſuitable labours for Heaven.

Fifthly, If your hopes be right for Heaven, then will your converſation be in Heaven, *Phil.* 3. 20. *But our converſation is in Heaven, whence alſo we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall change our vile bodies, that it may be faſhioned like to his glorious body.* You will be taken up about heavenly things, and driving on heavenly concerns: You will be maintaining entercourſe in Heaven, and keeping up your converſes with God; you will be often taking journeys to Heaven in your contemplations and deſires; your buſineſs will be much in Heaven, and your occaſions thither frequent; though you live on Earth, yet you will converſe in Heaven. As Doctor *Preſton* ſaid when he was near death, *I ſhall but change my place, not my company.* O try your hopes for Heaven by your converſation, if that be engaged about the things of Heaven now; if your work be in Heaven, your reſt ſhall be in Heaven alſo.

Sixthly, If your hopes for Heaven be right, you will willingly undergo whatſoever ſufferings and dangers lye in your way to Heaven. He that is ſure of reaching home at laſt, will venture through any dangers in his way. O what hazards will men run through to get an earthly Crown! no difficulties will diſcourage them; how much more will hopes for Heaven carry Souls through the Red-Sea of afflictions and bloody ſufferings they may meet with before they come to it! *Acts* 20. 24. *chap.* 21. 13.

He

He that cannot conſent to drink of the cup Chriſt drinks of, and which the Father ſhall give him to drink, and to ſubmit to the cruelleſt death, loſſes, ſhame, tryals and torments, which his faithfulneſs to God may bring him to, muſt reckon again, and take up other concluſions about his future ſtate; eaſier terms cannot be granted: *Whoſoever he be of you that forſaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my diſciple*, Luke 14. 33. *He that will come after me, muſt deny himſelf, take up his Croſs, and follow me*, Matth. 16. 24. *We muſt through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God*, Acts 14. 22. *If we ſuffer with him, we ſhall reign with him*, 2 Tim. 2. 12.

Secondly, Lay up deſires for glory, not only ſome deſires of glory, but ſuch deſires as nothing elſe can ſatisfie but glory; which nothing ſhort of a whole God can content. Moſt Souls in this life limit their deſires, and take up their wiſhes too ſhort of true bleſſedneſs: *My ſoul thirſteth for God* (ſaith God) but it was only for ſome ſights of his *power and glory, as he had ſeen him in his Sanctuary*, Pſal. 63. 1, 3. Some looks through the lattice; ſome embraces of Chriſt in the arms of faith, pleaſed the Spouſe, and doth ſatisfie moſt ſouls here: Alas, how few are the deſires of gracious ſouls, which a little of God will not content! One deſires grace, another peace; ſome are for quickenings and comforts; others for enlightenings, for higher meaſures of knowledge, for ſome ſights of God through a glaſs; but how few breathings are there, to ſee as we are ſeen, to know as we are known?

known? 1 *Cor.* 13. 12. And indeed 'tis strange that Heaven-born souls, that heirs of glory, and fellow citizens of Heaven, should have no more longings after their own home, and not only for some first-fruits, but the full ripe fruits of their own Country. *David* had sometimes workings after this, not only for God to come to him, but for himself to go to God; when his heart takes a leap from the path of life, into the presence of God, where is fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore. *Psal.* 16. 11. *Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.* From the beholding of his face in righteousness here, he longs for the satisfying visions of God in glory. *Psal.* 17. 15. *As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness.* *Paul* also under the highest enjoyments of God here, had his unsatisfied longings to be with him as best of all, *Phil.* 1. 23. and in respect of which he counts his greatest intimacy with Christ in the body, to be a kind of absence. 2 *Cor.* 5. 6. *Knowing that whiles we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord.* Do not terminate your desires upon any thing that can satisfie you on this side glory: Get such desires raised, which cannot be answered till you come to Heaven with such kind of breathings as these; *O when shall I come to that blessed state, to know as I am known; to have every corner of my heart filled with the immediate emanations of his glorious fulness! O when will that time, or rather Eternity come, when I shall be satisfied with looking on*

that

that blessed face which is every day the Angels wonder, and the Saints joy. Here alas! I lie among the pots, all sooty and defiled, whiles the Vessels of my Fathers house, and the Bowls before the Altar, out of which my Lord alway drinketh, are bright and glorious. Now I have my habitation where Dragons lie, while a glorious Pavilion stands empty for me: Here I feed on my own dung, and oft-times eat the excrements of Devils, and all the while there's bread enough in my Fathers house, and my Brethren fare deliciously at the Kings Table. O when shall my work be done, that I may be gone! When shall the things for cleansing be given me, and the days of my purification be accomplished, that my turn may come to go in to the Lord my King! When shall the Nuptial Garments, the Bridal Ornaments, the Robe, the Ring, the Royal Vestments bespangled with costly Jewels, be given me, with this most welcom message, Arise my Love, my Dove, my Fair One, and come away! Lay up such kind of breathings after the Mountains of Spices, the Everlasting-Hills, the Rivers of Pleasures, the Bride-chamber of Glory, where you shall be ever with the Lord. (k) This will hasten your pace to Heaven, and mount you on the wings of a Dove: This will help you to pass by the World's glory with a holy scorn, and to bear its cruelty with incredible patience.

Thirdly, Lay up all the Treasures you can to greaten glory: Though the least portion of glory is satisfying, yet the highest measures of

(k) Glory, Glory dwelleth in *Immanuel's* Land. *Rutherford's* last words.

glory are desirable, because in it there is the greatest conformity to God, 1 *John* 3. 2. *Luke* 10. 17, 19, 20. *Dan.* 12. 3. and the fullest enjoyment of God. The Lord Jesus doth propose degrees of glory for the encouragement of his people to greater improvements of grace; and therefore the highest degrees of glory are desirable: O get as much as you can here to greaten your felicity in Heaven. Do all you may to make your Crown more massy, and your Mansion more fair, and your pleasures more full to all Eternity.

Several things have a tendency to greaten your glory. The more grace you improve now, the greater will be your glory; he that gained ten pounds, had ten Cities: Grace is seed sown, according to its measure will be the harvest: *What a man sows, that shall he reap*: *Gal.* 6. 7. The less seed is sown, the less crop will there be; and the more seed, the larger encrease, 1 *Cor.* 3. 9. Glory is a Crown of Righteousness proportioned to the utmost improvements of Grace. The more work you do for God, the greater will be your wages of grace in glory, 1 *Pet.* 5. 2, 4. 2 *Cor.* 5. 10. *That every one should receive according to what is don in the body.*

The more you lay out for God, the more shall you receive from him, 2 *Cor.* 9. 6. who will certainly repay it.

The greater your sufferings are for God, the greater will your rejoycings be with him: *They that sow in tears shall reap in joy*, *Psal.* 126. 5. Look what disproportion there is between the Seed-

Seed-time and Harvest, far greater is there between the Saints sufferings, sorrows, and triumphing joy: Their sorrow lies within the compass of a short night, their joy begins with that morning which hath no evening to follow it, *Psal.* 30. 5. Their tears will scarcely fill a bottel, but their pleasures are so vast an Ocean, as that they cannot be received, but must be entred into, *Mat.* 25. 21. *Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,* 2 Cor. 4. 17. Yea the present consolations of the Saints oft-times abound in their sufferings; *The ringing of my Chains hath been sweet musick in my ears,* (said *Guy de Bres*;) *all my former discourses were but as a blind man's of colours, in respect of my present feeling: O what a precious comforter is a good Conscience!* How unspeakable then are those rejoycings, when all tears shall be wiped off, when sorrow and mourning shall fly away, *Mat.* 5. 10, 11, 12.

The more your losses are for Christ on earth, the greater will be your gain in Heaven. *Heb.* 10. 34. *And took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in your selves that you have in Heaven a better and an enduring substance.* Men can never bring their Goods to a better Market, than to have them spoil'd for the sake of Christ: your goods you lose for Christ are capable of being spoil'd; your goods you shall receive in Heaven are above all injury; the very *bags wax not old,* much less the treasure: time will mar your best interests here. Alas, what is a little old goods, Moth-eaten garments, rusty silver

ſubject to change; compared with that ſubſtance, whoſe duration is as long as Eternity, and whoſe extenſion is as large as Immenſity? and ſuch is God in Chriſt, the Saints eternal treaſure: *Mat.* 19. 29. *And in the World to come life eternal.* Carnal reaſon judges them the greateſt fools that dare to be undone for their Profeſſion; whereas divine truth reckons ſuch the mad men, who to eſcape them that can but kill the body, durſt encounter him who can damn both ſoul and body in hell, *Mat.* 10. 28. And to lay a foundation of a few days ſafety upon the ruines of themſelves and others. *How dangerous* (ſaid Mr. *Cooper*) *is their eſtate, who cannot riſe but with the fall of many?* Et quantulum ſit illud propter quod nos reliquiſti? *How poor are thoſe things* (ſaith he) *for which you have left us?* whereas the Saints loſſes for Chriſt are their greateſt gain, while the things they part with are but temporal; but thoſe they gain are eternal, 2 *Cor.* 4. 18.

Laſtly, The more ſouls you help to Heaven, the more treaſure you prepare for Heaven; *Dan.* 12. 3. *They that be wiſe* (the Margin hath it, they that be teachers) *ſhall ſhine as the brightneſs of the Firmament; and they that turn many to righteouſneſs, as the Stars for ever and ever.* As nothing doth ſink a perſon deeper into Hell, than to have the blood of ſouls upon its head, and to become the occaſion of others periſhing, *Jer.* 2. 34. So it wonderfully greatens a perſons own bleſſedneſs in Heaven, to be the means of getting others to be bleſſed alſo: 1 *Theſ.* 2. 19. *For what is our hope, or joy, or crown*

of

of rejoycing? are not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? for ye are our glory and joy.

Lastly, Lay up preparations for glory: Glory is a great thing: O what a change doth Heaven make upon a Believers state! *We shall all be changed*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 51. from corruption to incorruption; from sin to spotless purity; from imperfection to perfection; from darkness to knowledge; from faith to sight; from Espousals to a Marriage-day: and what preparations do such a change call for? What if death should surprize you, and take you in your old cloaths? 'tis not your daily garments, no not your best rayments are good enough for your Marriage-day: your attire must be all new when you solemnize your eternal Nuptials to the King of Glory. O what manner of persons should you be who look for new Heavens, and a new Earth! If a *Paul* be not sufficient to carry a Love-token to Christ's Spouse here on Earth, 2 *Cor.* 2. 16. *Who is sufficient for these things?* Who then are fit to lie in the Bridrooms arms to all eternity? Few think what a change must be before the Saints can get to Heaven: 1 *Cor.* 15. 50. *Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of heaven; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.* If so much preparation-work must be dispatch'd before an *Esther* could be fit for the imbraces of an earthly King, *Esth.* 2. 12. six months for purifying with Oyl of Myrrh, and six months with sweet Odours, and with other things? How much sanctification-work is needful to meeten a soul for the immediate enjoyment

enjoyment of God in glory? and how unready are the moſt of Souls for ſuch a change? O Believers! haſten about your preparations for Heaven, ſeeing you have no fixation on Earth, and know not what hour your Lord will come. In order to which, take theſe ſix directions.

First, Get your hearts more looſe from this preſent world; men that change places, knock up, and take abroad things they muſt carry with them: Your hearts (Chriſtians) are the principal things you muſt take with you to Heaven; it may be you have gone to God in duties many a time, and left your hearts behind you; but you cannot go to God in glory, except your hearts be with you. And O what a difficult work is it to get the heart (upon choice) looſe from every thing below God! and till this be done, there's no getting to Heaven: Things faſtned to the free-hold (they ſay) cannot be removed; how then can that heart get to glory, that is nailed down to the world, and things below. Be dayly looſening your hearts from the world, eſtates, houſes, lands, trades, friends, relations, and every thing below; for you may not have time to get them off without loſs, when death comes: you muſt leave them all ſhortly, and you know not how ſoon, to go to better friends and intereſts: theſe have been ſnares and ſpears to your Souls, and have given you many a wound, and ſtill hinder your ſpeeding to glory; and why ſhould you be loth to part with them? O Chriſtians! if you are willing to be with Chriſt, you will give your hearts warning to be gone from theſe taberna-

bernacles, and to take their leave of this world dayly.

Secondly, Press after more maturity in your graces; the more ripe, the more fit for gathering, *Joel* 3. 13. *Tamar* must tarry a Widow till *Selah* be grown, *Gen.* 38. 11. and your marriage-day must be delayed till you come to a full age: The Saints must be as a shock of Corn that cometh in its season, *Job* 5. 25. Ripen a pace in your graces, if you would get to glory: Get your faith, hope, patience, and every grace encreased daily; especially your love to God; that's the grace shall abide in glory, 1 *Cor.* 13. 8. Faith and Hope are the Soul's helps, and companions in the way; but Love will be an eternal inhabitant with you. Get purer, deeper rooted, stronger, more enlarged love to Jesus Christ every day, till you be downright sick for him; this will make your life a death without his presence here, and your death to be life in being with him for ever. 'Twas love to Christ made *Ignatius* so dead to all things below, (*a*) and longing to be with Christ: 'Tis storied of him, that when he was dead, and his heart taken out, they saw the name of Jesus written in it in Letters of Gold: The more love to God, the more fit for God; *for God is love*, (*b*).

Thirdly, Get and keep the testimony of a good conscience, that may witness for you in the day of Christ: when you die, you are to have tryal for your life, your inheritance, your All; and you had need have your wit-

(*a*) *Vita sine Christo mors est*; Ignat. [*b*] *Non est in me incendium quidpiam amans*; D. Ludov. Rub.

ness

neſs firm, and ready: Now there are two great Witneſſes you will need in that day to clear your title; the witneſs of Conſcience, and the Spirit: have the one on your ſide, and you will not want the other. Get your Conſciences ſprinkled with the blood of Chriſt, and purged from dead works by the Spirit of Chriſt, that it may be able to appear for you in that day. The blood of Chriſt will put words into the mouth of Conſcience for you, to plead the general iſſue, and the benefit of pardoning grace, wherein you have been tranſgreſſors; enlightned Conſcience will accuſe you that you have ſinned; and beſprinkled Conſcience will plead for you that you are pardoned; and purged Conſcience will teſtifie for you that you are changed, and that you hate the evil you have done, and love the holineſs you have neglected. O of what wonderful uſe will the teſtimony of a good Conſcience be when you ſtand at the Bar of God! Get it true to you now, and ſure for you then.

Fourthly, Maintain more conſtant walks with God daily; this will fit you for your eternal fellowſhip with him. Converſe with God is begun acquaintance here, and in Heaven is perfect friendſhip; and perpetual fellowſhip. It will much fit you for Heaven hereafter, to begin the work of Heaven here, which lies in maintain'd intercourſe with him. Through theſe gallery-walks with God, do the Saints paſs into the Preſence Chamber, and ſit down with him for ever: Communion with God now, is Heaven begun; ſuch are fitteſt for his preſence in glory,

glory, who are train'd up in his company here.

Fifthly, If you would prepare for Heaven, diſpatch your work on Earth: Heaven is a ſtate of reſt, and reſt follows the finiſhing of labour, *Heb.* 4. 9. *Rev.* 4. 3. *Paul* muſt end his fight, finiſh his courſe, and keep the faith, before he can reach the Crown: 2 *Tim.* 4. 7, 8. In the grave there's no wiſdom, device, or work; this is your only time for labour while you are in the Vineyard. O how much work is behind with moſt! which will make a departure terrible to an awakened Conſcience. Haſte about your neglected work; you have (it may be) much work to do with others, in your families, with your relations; poſſibly there are ſome ſouls in their graves, and you have not done what you might to bring them forth; dead Husband, Wife, Children, Servants, for whom you muſt do more, or cannot comfortably appear before God. O haſten about this work, that you may give up your account with joy! There's ſoul-work to be done, to get corruptions ſubdued, graces ſtrengthned, your accounts ſtated, evidences cleared, and lamps trimmed, which muſt be attended with utmoſt vigour. If you would get home, finiſh your work.

Laſtly, Be always ready, waiting for the coming of the Lord: *Luke* 12. 35, 36. *Let your loyns be girt about, and your lights burning, and ye your ſelves like unto men, that wait for their Lord when he will return from the Wedding; that when he cometh, and knocketh, they may open to him immediately*: 2 Pet. 3. 12. *Looking for, and*

and hastening to the coming of the day of God: Not only be waiting for your change, but longing after it, as persons that are ready for a desired journey think the time long ere they go. *Why are the Wheels of his Chariot so long a coming?* Judg. 5. 28. *The Spirit and the Bride say come,* Rev. 22. 17. *With the Virgins go out to meet him,* Mat. 25. 1. *If you knew the welcome that abideth for you when you come home, ye would hasten your pace*; Rutherf. The more ready you are for the coming of Christ, the more will you long for his appearance; and the more grateful will his approach be. The uncertainty of that time when the Lord Jesus shall appear, and the unseasonableness of that surprisal for preparation-work, should put Christians on continual readiness, lest coming in an hour they know not of, they be found unfit to enter in, and the door be shut, *Mat.* 25. 10.

O how dreadful will a miscarriage be at last! All the hopes, labours and comfort of your life depend upon your final safety, and happy conclusion of your day: 'Tis a great thing to live a sanctified, and die a saved soul. O how few imagine the difficulty of being a Christian indeed, and the infinite concern of securing an immortal soul, and a sure title to the unsearchable riches of the other world! Oh the folly and madness rational creatures, to make every thing sure but salvation, and to spend their time and strength about the many things of a perishing life, and lose the better part! Whoever thou art that castest thine eye upon this discourse, thou wilt one day find Religion to be thy chiefest

eſt intereſt; when thou comeſt to take thy farewel of a vain deceitful world, and ſeeſt all thy Lovers, for whom thou haſt ſleighted thy precious Soul, thy Sovereign Lord, and dying Redeemer, to prove miſerable comforters, not able to afford one drop of Balm, to heal, or Cordial to chear thy fainting heart, and affrighted conſcience: When thou ſeeſt pale Death deliver thee a ſummons to appear before the holy God, and to give an account of thy Stewardſhip, when thou ſeeſt the Books opened, and ſuch a fearful charge againſt thy guilty conſcience, which thou canſt not deny or anſwer; then wilt thou find godlineſs in the power of it, to be the greateſt gain; and wouldſt give ten thouſand worlds for ſuch an evidence as *Hezekiah* and *Paul* had, when within view of death and eternity. And is not Religion as much thy concern, and ſhould be as grateful now, and all thoſe great and important duties of piety which this Book laies before thee; thought to be as adviſable now, when time and capacity may render them ſenſible, as in a dying hour, when deſires and purpoſes may be too late? O do not content thy treacherous heart, to caſt a tranſient glance upon theſe lines, to approve or commend them, and after all to ſhake hands with theſe vaſt and concerning Truths in them, and live and die a ſtranger to this great and heavenly work; but reſolve to ſet about it preſently, to purſue it throughly, that when your Trading-day is done, your enriching Eternity may begin, and you receive that vaſt Inheritance that fadeth not away, eternal in the Heavens.

FINIS.